

VĀRĀNASĪ

(An Introduction to the Greatness of the City)

Prepared by the Purāṇa Department of the All-India Kashiraj
Trust on behalf of the Secretary of Organizing Committee
of the IASS



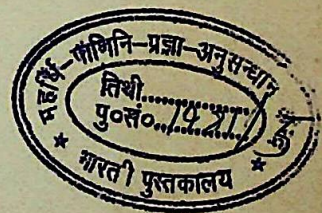
ALL-INDIA KASHIRAJ TRUST
FORT, RAMNAGAR, VARANASI

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FOREWORD

Vārāṇasī or Kāśī is one of the most renowned cities of the world and probably the most celebrated in the sacred texts. The charm of this holy city has fascinated the hearts and the minds of men since immemorial time. Hundreds of authors have tried to describe its greatness and to express in words the mysterious attraction they had experienced at the contact with this enchanting atmosphere of Kāśī, the splendid one.

'*City of learning*' as it is usually depicted, Vārāṇasī is most fit to host the Vth World Sanskrit Conference, because it has always been the place where every Philosopher or Saint had desired to come to have his doctrine or *mārga* approved by the *paṇḍits* of Kāśī. Praises and eulogies of Vārāṇasī and studies on it are not lacking. This brochure does not pretend to be one more among so many. It is simply a 'key' to the city for the visitor, who wants to get the best in the shortest time. The booklet is not an 'original' work, it is rather a 'composition' of material which aims at stressing the greatness of the city in all its aspects. These pages are presented by the staff of the Purāṇa Department of the All-India Kashiraj Trust, which aims at keeping alive the ancient and glorious tradition of India and so the 'purāṇic' importance of the town is particularly underlined. It has always been put attention to give the most important references to the purāṇic texts wherever available.

As the Conference takes place in the month of Kārtika (Oct.—Nov.) we thought it proper to add a short Appendix on this month, one of the most sacred and dear to the hearts of all the Hindus.

We present these pages as an homage of gratitude and welcome to the delegates to the Vth World Sanskrit Conference.

Vibhuti Narain Singh
(Maharaja of Benares)

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INTRODUCTION

The sacred Kāśī of the texts, better known as Vārāṇasī, or Banāras—at it was called until recently, and as it is in common use among the people—is a town of more than eight hundred thousand persons. It is situated in the middle of the Gangetic plain nearly half-way between Delhi and Calcutta on the Grand Trunk Road, National Highway No. 2, which partly corresponds to the *Uttaramārga* of ancient times. Due to its position on this important arterial road and more particularly because of its being at the point where the *Uttaramārga* had to cross the Gaṅgā, Vārāṇasī has been a thriving centre of activity since ancient times.

The archaeological finds at Rājghāt, on the northern outskirts of the present Vārāṇasī, bear witness to the existence of the town as far back as the IX B. C., but the town must be much older. 'There is hardly any city in the world—we can affirm with P. V. Kane¹—that can claim greater antiquity, greater continuity and greater popular veneration than Banaras. Banaras has been a holy city for at least thirty centuries. No city in India arouses the religious emotions of Hindus as much as Kāśī does. To the Hindu mind it represents great and unbroken traditions of religious sanctity and learning. It is a miniature of Hindu life through the ages in all its great complexities and contradictions. Not only Hinduism with its numerous sects has flourished here for numberless centuries, but the principles of Buddhism, one of the great religions of the world, were first proclaimed here by Śākyamuni after he received Enlightenment at Bodh-Gayā under the Bodhi tree'. Thousands of verses are found in the epics and purāṇas about Banaras. 'Kāśī is a symbol for Hindus', says Diana L. Eck². 'To say this is to acknowledge (...) that it is a city so replete with dimensions of meaning, so inexhaustible in its richness that there is no end to what can be said about it. As a symbol, Kāśī leads one who enters into its life and lore to glimpse the Supreme. It is an open-ended in the direction of the Transcendent. As a symbol it is not reducible to a series of statements or a set of facts.'

All the *Mahātmyas* written on Kāśī or Vārāṇasī are proof enough that the charm of this city on visitors, pilgrims and even its inhabitants is not merely a modern feature.

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काशीप्राप्तिरियं योगः काशीप्राप्तिरियं तपः ।
 काशीप्राप्तिरियं दानं काशीप्राप्तिः शिवार्चनम् ॥ 41 ॥
 काशीप्राप्तिरियं यागः काशीप्राप्तिस्तु कर्म तत् ।
 काशीप्राप्तिरियं स्वर्गः काशीप्राप्तिरियं सुखम् ॥ 42 ॥
 कः कामः को मदः क्रोधः को लोभः का ह्यहंक्रुतिः ।
 किं मासत्यं किमज्ञानं कर्म किं जाड्यता च का ॥ 43 ॥
 का भीतिः कोऽथवा कालः का जरा किं च दुष्कृतम् ।
 किं राज्यं कोऽन्तरायो वा नृणां काशीनिवासिनाम् ॥ 44 ॥

(Pd. VI. 236. 41-44)

Vārāṇasī is a city which has to be experienced at different levels simultaneously³. It has a history, but it is beyond its history that one understands it. While it is a religious town, it is through the concrete daily life of its people that one perceives its true religious role. It is a commercial centre, a trade market, yet it is through the defenceless simplicity of its people that one realizes the ability of its merchants. The salient features of this town are not apparent from its political and economic history; they have to be discovered in its ontological reality, among its people of today and yesterday, in its streets full of temples, *liṅgas* and crowd and in the silent and meditative contemplation of its beauty at sunrise and sunset. The almost complete absence of great political leaders in its millenarian history makes this town even greater. In this respect Vārāṇasī is more similar to Jerusalem than to Rome: its greatness lies in its people and in its soil rather than in its kings or political influence.

Works on Vārāṇasī and Kāśī are not lacking: the city has been studied recently as a sacred complex, by Diana L. Eck⁴, from an anthropological point of view by L. P. Vidyarhi, Makhan Jha, Surajit Sinha and Baidyanath Sarasvati, from mainly an historical point of view by A. S. Altekar and Motichandra, who incidentally conducted a very profound research on the sacred town in all its various aspects. Kubernath Sukul, who has written several books and booklets on Vārāṇasī, represents the more conservative and orthodox way of approaching historical research; M. A. Sherring, E. B. Havell have studied the town with a partisan bias, while R. L. Singh has described its geographical peculiarities. In ancient times also tourists and pilgrims, like Fa-Hien and Hiuen-

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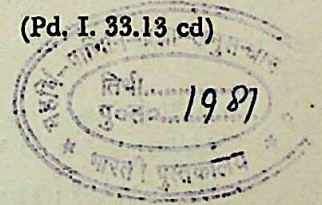
Tsang, F. Bernier, J. B. Tavernier and others, left records of those aspects of Kāśī that most attracted their attention. Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and Christians have shown interest in Vārāṇasī. Philosophers, *Dharmāryas*, pilgrims, saints and beggars, Indian and foreign, rich, poor, or dying continued to visit the city and have been attracted by its charm.

The Indian Government has set up a plant for Diesel Locomotives Work, the largest in South East Asia. The Banaras Hindu University Campus—one of the three Universities of Vārāṇasī—is second to none in India, and its Institute of Technology rivals those at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta Kanpur and Madras. Vārāṇasī is a centre of silk, ivory and wood work and is famous for its musicians. It is renowned all over India for its *Kāfirāja*, which has still its worthy representative in the present *Mahārāj* of Banāras, loved and venerated by all the people, who continue to hail him with 'Hara Hara Mahādeva'. He is the founder of the All-India Kāśirāj Trust, which under the aegis of the President of India, aims at spreading Indian Culture; the Purāṇa Department is one of its branches.

Vārāṇasī is famous in India and abroad for all the above mentioned characteristics, which contribute to make it unique among the cities of the world. The town deserves a long visit, because it cannot be discovered in one day or even in one week. One has to love it and be slowly transformed by it; only after this inner transformation can one expect the unveiling of its secrets :

अमुक्तास्तन्न पश्यन्ति मुक्ताः पश्यन्ति चेतसा ॥

(Pd. I. 33.13 cd)



1. THE PURĀNIC NAMES OF VĀRĀṆASĪ*

The identification of Kāśī with Vārāṇasī is only for simplicity's sake, it does not correspond to the use of the two terms in the texts and in the common feelings of the people. The first indeed represents more commonly the whole territory or the town only in its religious aspect, the second applies more specifically to the town as a geographographic setting or municipality, particularly the area between the rivers Varuṇā and Asī, which form the boundaries of the town to the North and the South respectively.⁵

In the purāṇic literature, the town has besides these two names several others, some of which are current even now: a few of them are enumerated in the following *ślokas* :

वाराणसीति काशीति महामन्त्रमिमं जपन् ।
यावज्जीवं त्रिसन्ध्यं तु जन्तुर्जातु न जायते ॥^{१२६}॥
अविमुक्तं महाक्षेत्रं स्मरन् प्राणांस्तु यस्त्यजेत् ।
दूरदेशान्तरस्थोऽपि सोऽपि जातु न जायते ॥^{१२७}॥
आनन्दकानने यस्य चित्तं संस्मरे सदा ।
तत्क्षेत्रनामश्रवणान्न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥^{१२८}॥
रुद्रवासे वपेन्नित्यं नरो नियतमानसः ।
एनसामपि संभारं कृत्वा कालाद्विमुच्यते ॥^{१२९}॥
महाश्मशानमासाद्य यदि देवाद्विपद्यते ।
पुनः श्मशानशयनं न क्वापि लभते पुमान् ॥^{१३०}॥
(Kkh. 31.126-130)

Here we find the most renowned synonyms of Vārāṇasī, the *Mahātirtha*⁶ and *Mahākṣetra*⁷.

VĀRĀṆASĪ : The city between the Varuṇā and the Asī

The name, "Vārāṇasī" which occurs already in the Buddhist *Jātakas* and in the *Mahābhārata*, describes the town as the one which is between the Varuṇā⁸ and the Asī⁹. The river Asī in some *Purāṇas*¹⁰ is known as the *Śuṣkanadī*¹¹ because of the very small quantity of water it has except during the monsoon. The

* This part is based on Diana L. Eck, *Banāras, City of Light*, see Bibliography.

(5)

*Purāṇas*¹² and the *Mahābhārata*¹³ speak of a river called *Varāṇasī*, an affluent of the *Gaṅgā*, which has to be identified with the *Varaṇā*¹⁴. It is not improbable that the name *Varāṇasī* might have been derived from the name of this river, i.e., as the town on the *Varāṇasī* : a definition that would appropriately apply to the most ancient site of the town known archaeologically.

The *Varaṇā* and the *Asī* are said to originate respectively from the right and left legs of *Viṣṇu*, lying at *Prayāga*¹⁵. They are not only the boundaries of the city but in the purāṇic vision they become its *kṣetrapālas*.¹⁶ Their meaning is spiritually interpreted by *Jabāla Upaniṣad*, 2 through a popular etymology :

का वै वरणा का च नासीति ^{१७} । सर्वानिन्द्रियकृतान् दोषान् वारयतीति
तेन वरणा भवति । सर्वानिन्द्रियकृतान् पापान् नाशयतीति तेन नासी भवतीति ॥

In *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* they become the symbols of *piṅgalā* and *īdā* respectively¹⁸ in an attempt towards a mystical interpretation of *Varāṇasī* where the city, which lies in their middle, plays the symbolic role of *Suṣumnā*.

KĀŚĪ : The Luminous city :

Kāśī is the oldest name of the city and more specifically of the area in which *Varāṇasī* is situated. It is clearly mentioned in *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* I. 2. 9, in some ancient *Upaniṣads*¹⁹, in *Pāṇini* IV. 2. 116 and in *Mahābhāṣya*.²⁰ *Kāśīgrāma* is used in *Jātakas* Nos 239 and 283, and *Kāśīpurī* in *Mahābhārata* VI. 14. 6; XIII. 168. 26.

The word *Kāśī* has been explained in various ways. For the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa*, *Kāśī*, situated on the 3 points of *Śiva's triśūla*,²¹ is so called because there *Śiva* spreads his light :

काशतेऽत्र यतो ज्योतिस्तदनाख्येयमीश्वरः ।
अतो नामापरं चास्तु काशीति प्रथितं विभो ॥

(KKh. 26.27)

It is exactly because on this *triśūla*, a hint to the three hillocks on which the city was built, that according to *Śabda kalpadruma's* definition, *Kāśī* shines :

काशते शिवत्रिशूलोपरि ।

or illumines the universe :

काशयति प्रकाशयतीदं सर्वं या ॥

(6)

For the Śiva Purāṇa, Koṭirudra Samhitā 22.20 cd, Kāśī marks *mokṣa* dawn on everybody by giving *jñā* :

मोक्षप्रकाशिका काशी ज्ञानदा मम सुप्रिया ॥

For the Svayambhu Purāṇa²², the ṛṣi Kāśyapa : owes its name to Kāśī.

यदास्या यातः शास्ता काश्यपो मुनिनायकः ।

तदा तस्यां वाराणस्यां काश्याख्यञ्च प्रकीर्तितः ॥

The Kāśī Rahaṣya links the name of the city with the grass *Kāśa*²³, while F. E. Pārgiter²⁴ suggests a connection with the purāṇic king Kāśa, a scion of the dynasty which later, also produced the famous Divodāsa.

For Kāśī Rahaṣya 2.28 cd Kāśī is Brahman itself of which this turning world is but an expansion :

काशी ब्रह्मेति विख्याता यद्विवर्त्तो जगद्भ्रमः ॥

For the pilgrim of today and yesterday the word Kāśī is evocative of purification and sanctity.

AVIMUKTA: The Never-Forsaken.

This name of Vārāṇasī, very common in the purāṇic literature but almost dropped from usage²⁵, is explained in the purāṇas in different ways. The town is so called because it is never forsaken by Śiva (and Pārvatī) :

विमुक्तं न मया यस्यान्मोह्यते वा कदाचन ।

महत् क्षेत्रमिदं तस्मादविमुक्तमिदं स्मृतम् ॥

Nor is it forsaken even at the time of *pralaya* :²⁶

मुने प्रलयकालेऽपि न तत्क्षेत्रं कदाचन ।

विमुक्तं हि शिवाभ्यां यदविमुक्तं ततो विदुः ॥²⁷

Or it is so called because it was never abandoned by Śiva. Even when he had to leave the town momentarily, he left it physically but remained there in the form of *liṅga* :

मन्दराद्रिगतेनापि क्षेत्रं नैतत्पिनाकिना ।

विमुक्तं लिङ्गरूपेण अविमुक्तमतः स्मृतम् ॥²⁸

Therefore, all those who have a *darśana* of the *liṅga* called Avimukteśvara are relieved (*vimukta*) from all the bonds of *karma* :

(7)

अविमुक्तेश्वरं लिङ्गं दृष्ट्वा क्षेत्रेऽविमुक्तके ।

विमुक्त एव भवति सर्वस्मात्कर्मबन्धनात् ॥²⁹

Śiva Purāṇa IV. 23. 11-22a³⁰ interpretes the name *Avimukta* as bestower of *mukti* to everyone even if devoid of *jñāna*, *bhakti*, etc. *Avimukta*, then, should never be abandoned³¹ at all the bonds of sins (*avi*) are here definitively and for ever severed.

अविशब्देन पापस्तु वेदोक्तः कथ्यते द्विजैः ।

तेन मुक्तं मया जुष्टमविमुक्तमतोच्यते ॥³²

For some *Purāṇas* *Avimukta* is Śiva himself³³ and *Ambikā* is *Avimuktā*,

अविमुक्तः शिवः सोऽहमविमुक्ता त्वमम्बिके ॥³⁴

ĀNANDAKĀNANA: The Forest of Bliss

The name '*Ānandakānana*', which is very rare in contemporary use expresses the idea that *Vārāṇasī* bestows '*ānanda*' or is itself the essence of *ānanda*³⁵. *Ānandakānana* is one of the most inspiring titles of *Vārāṇasī*, which is so called by the *devas*.

आनन्दकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति देवा धर्माख्यकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति विप्राः ।

अथार्थकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति लोकाः कामारिकाननमिति प्रतिकृतकामाः ॥³⁷

This title is second in importance only to *Brahmakānana*. The two titles can even merge into one and become *Brahmānanda Kānana*, which is surely the best way to define the essence of *Kāśī* according to the philosophy of the *māhātmyakāras*. This is the place where Śiva and Pārvatī spent countless moments of bliss and left their *liṅgas* spread everywhere 'like little sprouts arisen out of sheer bliss'.⁴¹ In *Kāśī* everything is and bestows bliss; therefore, concludes the author of this passage :

आनन्दरूपा जायन्ते तेन कास्यां हि जन्तवः ।⁴³

All those who crave the supreme bliss or *mukti*,⁴⁴ and all varieties of living beings desire to come and live here.⁴⁵ The fascination and the enchantment of *Vārāṇasī* goes far back in time and is deeply rooted in the hearts of men.

RUDRA VĀSA : The Abode of Śiva

Although the name of *Rudravāsa* is not current, everybody knows of the direct connection between *Vārāṇasī* and Śiv. In fact the present religious patron of the city is Śiva-*Viśvanātha* and the

city's main temple is dedicated to him. In the common feelings of people, in Vārāṇasī everything is pervaded by Śiva even the stones and the dust :

काशी के कंकर शिव शंकर ॥

Vārāṇasī is first of all Rudravāsa because Śiva lives in it. But it is so called also because there are *Śivaliṅgas* at every step and each person is *Rudramaya*, made of Śiva :

काश्यां रुद्रमयाः सर्वे जन्तवः श्रुतिनोदिताः ॥⁴⁶

and a moving Śivaliṅga itself :

येषां हि संस्थितिः काश्यां लिङ्गार्चनरतात्मनाम् ।

त एव मम लिङ्गानि जङ्गमानि न संशयः ॥⁴⁷

In Vārāṇasī all the persons are Rudra themselves.⁴⁸ So everyone in Kāśī reaches the highest state of being, Brahman itself, in the shape of Śiva by a special 'touch' of God :

यथा लौहं स्पर्शमणौ पतितं कनकम्भवेत् ।

तथा काश्यां ब्रह्मरूपं प्राप्नुयाच्छिवरूपताम् ॥⁴⁹

According to the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa*, all types of beings in Vārāṇasī bear the external symbols of Śiva; they are, so to say, Śiva incarnates : (or Kṛṣṇa incarnate, if they bear the symbols of Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu),⁵⁰ Everyone, living in this sacred town of Śiva, is indeed a *jīvan-mukta*.⁵¹ But although *jīvanmuktas*, Śiva themselves, the inhabitants of Vārāṇasī are said to reach *mukti* at the moment of death :

तमिहैव परं मोक्षं मरणादधिगच्छति⁵²

Kāśī is, indeed, the *muktipurī* par excellence, which bestows *mukti* to everybody in every moment of his spiritual evolution and in every point of his life.⁵³

This prevalence of Śiva in Vārāṇasī, that made the authors call it *Śaṅkarapurī*⁵⁴, *Śivapurī*⁵⁵ and *Śivarājadhāni*⁵⁶, did not keep the *Purāṇas* from calling it also *Vaiṣṇavapurī*⁵⁷ and *Harikṣetra*⁵⁸ because, explains the Vāmana Purāṇa⁵⁹, putting itself in a far remote past, it is now a Vāsudeva's *kṣetra* and only in future will it be a Śaṅkara's *kṣetra*. Vārāṇasī indeed is beyond any classification; if one knows the reality of this city one discovers that it is at the same time *Nārāyaṇavāsa*, *Rudravāsa* and *Brahmavāsa*.⁶⁰

This importance of Śiva and Viṣṇu, combined with what we know about the cult of *yakṣas* well attested throughout the history of Vārāṇasī, and of the *devī*, presents problems about the validity of the centrality of the cult of Śiva. This cult is clearly attested in Vārāṇasī only in later centuries and the *Purāṇas* speak of a time when Śiva had not yet chosen Vārāṇasī as his own abode.⁶¹

MAHĀŚMAŚĀNA : The Great Cremation-Ground

Vārāṇasī is very often said to be a '*śmaśāna*' or '*mahāśmaśāna*'. The word '*śmaśāna*' is explained in Kāśī Khaṇḍa. 40.103 :

श्मशब्देन शवः प्रोक्तः शानं शयनमुच्यते ।
निर्वचयति श्मशानार्थं मुने शब्दार्थकोविदाः ॥

This popular etymology is in tune with the reality of Vārāṇasī especially in past ages, when large areas of the town and its outskirts were possibly used as cremation ground⁶². To Vārāṇasī, in fact, people have always like to come to live out the end of thin lives so that they may obtain *mukti*⁶³. Therefore Vārāṇasī appeared a dreadful and immense cremation-ground⁶⁴. The presence of *salī* stones in several parts of the city would confirm such a fame. But the *māhātmyakāras* had deeper reasons for calling Vārāṇasī *mahāśmaśāna*. In Kāśī, indeed the very roots or seed of *karma* and *punarjanme* are burnt for ever :

भाविनो ये विपद्यन्ते वाराणस्यां ममाज्ञया ।
तेषां बीजानि दग्धानि श्मशानज्वलदग्निना ॥⁶⁵

or in a cleare way :

भज्यन्ते कर्मबीजानि यत्र विश्वेशवह्निना ।
अतो महाश्मशानं तदगतीनां परा गतिः ॥⁶⁶

Vārāṇasī is really a *karmanirmūlanī*⁶⁷. Here *pralaya* is overcome and all beings, even the great ones, will rest forever :

महान्त्यपि च भूतानि प्रलये समुपस्थिते ।
शेरतेऽत्र शवा भूत्वा श्मशानं तु ततो महत् ॥⁶⁸

So, even the worst title, like the dreadful *śmaśāna* acquires, when applied to Vārāṇasī, a new meaning and become attractive.

Besides the aforesaid names the city of Vārāṇasī has also several other appellatives like : Kośalā⁶⁹, Śrīnagarī⁷⁰, Gaurīmukha⁷¹ Jitvarī⁷², Apurnabhavabhavabhūmi, Tapahṣṭhali, Tīrtharājā

(usually applied to Prayāga, even if not exclusively)⁷³, Mahā-purī⁷⁴, Surundhana, Sudarśana, Puṣpavatī, Mohinī (in the Jātakas) etc. Aurangzeb re-christened it Muhammedabad but without success.

As well as its name the shape of Vārāṇasī also went on changing down the centuries. 'On the authority of the Padma Purāṇa, is the earliest period it was on the top of three hillocks and it was this fact that bestows upon it the distinction of being situated not on earth but on Shiva's trident. Subsequently its boundary was a circle of about ten miles radius, later the kṣetra was cut down to a chariot shape by the removal of a portion on the eastern side of the Ganges. Still later it was reduced towards the North also and became the shape of a conch, which is its present shape'⁷⁵.

कृते त्रिशूलवज्ज्यं त्रेतायाञ्चक्रवत्तथा ।
द्वापरे तु रथाकारं शङ्खाकारं कलौ युगे ॥⁷⁶

In more recent times the cultural landscape of the city underwent extensive transformation; from a town with larges of forest, ponds, rivuluts and canals, Vārāṇasī became the present overcrowded and congested and canals, Vārāṇasī become the present overcrowded and congested city we know today. Many of the narrow lanes of the old centre were enlarged, streets were widened and new streets built to accomodate the ever increasing traffic and population.

2. HISTORY OF VĀRĀṆASĪ*

a. *The Sources :*

The most important sources for a history of ancient Vārāṇasī are the archaeological excavations conducted at Rājghāṭ at the northern outskirts of the present physical setting of the city, and at Sārṇāth, a small village situated at a distance of 8 Km North of the Cantonment Railway Station.

The excavations at Rājghāṭ, near the river Varṇā, were conducted by the Deptt. of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of the Banaras Hindu University, Vārāṇasī, between 1957. and 1969. The results are being published by that same Deptt. The four parts printed presently are already enough to give an idea of the evolution of the town through the time. From these excavations it is possible to confirm the hints found in the literary sources that the ancient city of Vārāṇasī stood farther north than the present one, possibly on both sides of the Varṇā, at the point where it joins the Gaṅgā. On the other side, as well as on this side, of the Varṇā, in fact, signs of ancient habitations could be located.⁷⁷ These excavations lead us back to a period which ranges from circa 800 B. C. of Period I, upto the East India Company of Period VI. Not all the period are well and clearly represented, but there is enough material to show a continued settlement of the area. This area represents surely Vārāṇasī as it appears from a sealing inscribed in Gupta characters bearing the legend 'Vārāṇasyādhiṭhānadhikarāṇasya'⁷⁸ found here. The entire area as seen today consists of three blocks of mounds labelled as Mound 1, 2 and 3.⁷⁹ No larger building of any relevance has been found, but some amount of 'typical ceramic industries and other objects like coins, seal and sealings, terracotta figurines etc.'⁸⁰ could be gathered and they are now partially displayed in the museum of Calcutta, Mathurā, Vārāṇasī itself, and Sārṇāth. These excavations need to be continued also in other parts of the city and should even be extended to places as far as

* This section is partly based on Motichandra, *Kāśī ka itiḥāsa*. Kubernath Sukl, *Varanasi Down the ages*, and Diana L. Eck, *Banaras : the city of Light*--see Bibliography.

Mārkaṇḍeya, a temple at the confluence of the Gomatī with the Gaṅga at a distance of about 25 Km from Cantonment Railway Station, where the Purāṇas claim there was a settlement of Kāśī by Divodāsa.⁸¹

Sārnāth was brought briskly to the modern world when Jagat Singh, in XVIII century A. D. pulled down the Dharmarājika *stūpa* of Aśoka that had been standing there for centuries. The explorations and excavations which followed for several years resulted in the discovery of three *stūpas*, six monasteries, and many statues and inscriptions. In 1904-1905 F.O. Oertel exposed the Main Shrine of the Gupta period, the Aśokan pillar (3rd B.C.), its capital and the famous image of Buddha in the *Dharmacakravartana mudrā* (V. Cent. A.D.). John Marshall, H. Hargreaves and finally Daya Ram Sahni continued the excavations unearthing the Kumāradevi's inscription (XII Cent. A.D.), and a large number of important sculptures ranging from the Mauryan and Kushan periods to late medieval period. The excavations at Sārnāth help in reconstructing the history of Buddhism which, while it did not play a big role in the development of Vārāṇasi, and remained for a long time in the background, was indirectly responsible for some significant reactions in the evolution of the brahmanical religion, as well as having been the *dharma* of some of the rulers of Vārāṇasi.

The *literary sources* are far more numerous and extensive than the archaeological ones. The Vedas deserve logically more attention as they are the oldest. References to Kāśī or Vārāṇasi are available only in the later texts, specifically from the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads. This takes us back to at least the beginning of the first millenium B.C. If the lists of the Vedic *Sarvānukramāṇikā* had any value, the mention of *ṛṣi* Pratardana as Kāśirāja (king of Kāśī or of the Kāśis) in ṚgV X. 179 would take us far earlier than the date ascertained by the archaeological excavations at Rājghāṭ. The Kāśis, people living in the locale of the present Uttara Pradesh and eastward, and their king, Kāśya, are already known in the Pippalāda version of the Atharva Veda V. 22.14 and in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 13.5.4.19.

The next important source mentioning Vārāṇasī, after the Vedas, are the *Jātakas*. The *Jātakas* belong to the Khuddaka Nikāya of the Suttanipāta, one of the three *pitakas* of the Buddhist canon.

They must be as early as the IV Cent. B.C. They incorporate pre-Buddhistic fables, folktales and *gāthas*, which are surely older than V Cent. B. C. The *Jātakas*, therefore, constitute a precious material for our history. Many of these 547 stories indeed begin with :

अतीते वाराणसियम ब्रह्मदत्ते रज्जं कारेन्त....

and relate a story of the Buddha in his previous births as *bodhisattva* at Vārāṇasī. Such stories describe life, culture, usages and trade of Vārāṇasī before the Buddha, i. e. before the V B. C. It is not easy, however, to separate the ancient tales from the new additions and so we can hardly be sure that these descriptions of Vārāṇasī actually refer to the holy city. The Vārāṇasī of the *Jātakas* depicts something of an ideal place to which are applied all the characteristics of both the period in which the first folktales were composed as well as those of the more recent period when the *Jātakas* assimilated the older descriptions. The *Jātakas*, then, are to be used with great caution, although they are quite helpful especially for presenting an idea of the general cultural background of the area in the pre-Buddhistic times.

The *Purāṇas*, the *Epics* and the *Nibandhas* contain many stories about kings of, and happenings in, Vārāṇasī; they delight in long praises of the greatness and importance of the city and not infrequently, they describe its *tīrthas*, *liṅgas*, *ghāṭs* and temples. They are thus, no doubt, the longest and richest source for the history and setting of the holy city. It is impossible to give a full account of all the references to Vārāṇasī in these works. This holy city is not only praised as a separate *tīrtha* but its laudatory tributes can be found in *Gaṅgāmāhātmyas*, *Māghamāhātmyas*, *Kārtikamāhātmyas* and *māhātmyas* of any other month, *tīlhi*, festival, dharmaśāstric subject like *saṃskāras*, *snāna*, *śrāddha* etc. Vārāṇasī in the texts mentioned above is a side-subject of any topic from the epics to *nītiśāstra*, from *kathās* to *darśana*, from *upaniṣads* to *śilpaśāstra*. This holy city enters as a model of comparison for any matter discussed or introduced in the texts. Moreover, the *Purāṇas* have been written and revised in different epochs, so from the comparison of these passages we can get hints about the evolution of the town itself. But not all the *Purāṇas* dealing at some length with Vārāṇasī describe the town, many times they only

praise its greatness without any specific reference to single monuments. So the historical material in the Purāṇas and in the epics is far less than what one could reasonably expect, seeing the quantity of literature dedicated to it. The longest passages on Vārāṇasī are the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* of one hundred *adhyāyas* attached to the Skanda Purāṇa, which seems to describe the town in its most glorious historical period in the XII Cent. A.D. under the Gahadavālas; the *Kāśī Rahasya*, claiming to be a *pariśiṣṭa* of the Brahmaparivarta Purāṇa, which must be much later as it is abundantly quoted in the Trisṭhalīsetu (1560 A. D.) but never in the Kṛtyakalpataru (c. 1125 A. D.); the *Kāśī Kedāra Māhātmya*, a *khila* of the Brahmaparivarta Purāṇa, later than the previous two. Besides these three works which are somewhat independent of the Purāṇas to which they are attached, we have also *adhyāyas* on Vārāṇasī *Māhātmya* in Matsya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Śiva, Padma, Nāradiya Purāṇas and shorter references to the town in Brahmāṇḍa, Vāyu, Viṣṇu, Liṅga, Kūrma, Vāmana, Bhāgavata, Brahma, and Agni Purāṇas. The Mahābhārata has a few *adhyāyas* specially devoted to Vārāṇasī and many hints to it in several other places. As for the Nibandhas, they cover a period of about six centuries, from the XII to the XVII A. D. and give a rather accurate description of the *tīrthas*, temples and *liṅgas* of the town. As they are all dated, they are naturally useful for dating also the parts of the Purāṇas they quote.

Other sources, besides those mentioned till now, are the *Kuṭṣa-nīmatam*, a love-poem of the VIII Cent. A.D., whose action is laid in Vārāṇasī, the *Jabāla Upaniṣad*, which gives a mystical interpretation of Avimukta and is already quoted by Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on the Brahma-Śūtra⁹²; the *Gaṅgā Laharī*, hymn to the river Gaṅgā, written by Gaṅgānātha in the XVII Cent. A.D.; *Kāśī Tattva Bhāskara*, *Kāśīyātrā* and similar books which give small but interesting pieces of information about the town and its places. For the Vārāṇasī of the XII Cent. A.D. we have also Dāmodara's *Uktinyakti Prakaraṇa* and for the city in XVII Cent. A.D. we have the *Gīrvāṇapadamāñjarī* and the *Gīrvāṇamāñjarī* of Vāradarāja and Dhunḍirāja respectively, besides the short accounts of F. Bernier, and J. B. Tavernier. For the IVth and VIIth centuries we have the descriptions of the two Buddhist pilgrims Fu-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang respectively. Finally for the evolution of the urban habitat and the cultural landscape of the last three centuries we can take help from the

reports and studies of the District Gazetteers and of some scholars, who have written books on Kāśī or Vārāṇasī.

b. The History

I. *From the Beginning to the Buddha* (till V Cent. B.C.)

The excavations at Rājghāṭ take us back to the IX century B.C.; from that time the presence and impact of Kāśī-Vārāṇasī in history is well documented both in the archaeological and in the literary sources. For dates previous to that epoch we have to be more careful and suspicious, because for them we possess only a few literary references which are not datable with indisputable certainty. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa—whose date is normally accepted to be between 1200 and 800 B.C.—seems to confirm the existence of Vārāṇasī in that period. But it is apparently impossible to go farther back as both Atharva Veda V. 22.14 of the Pippalāda version and the purāṇic genealogies of kings going back to remote times create problems rather than giving support to the real existence of Vārāṇasī. The Purāṇas anyway have many things to say about Vārāṇasī under the lunar dynasty and if we can not accept them without a serious critical attitude, nor can we dismiss them as totally artificial or concocted. They insist on talking of Divodāsa who is the only great figure in the history of Vārāṇasī, with the exception of the Gahaḍavālas in the XII Cent. A.D. and a few kings of the modern Kāśīrājya from the XVIII Cent. A.D. The story of Divodāsa has different versions in the Purāṇas, of which the simplest is available in Brahma Purāṇa 11.40-54. It quotes a traditional *śloka* referring to Divodāsa by that showing that the story of Divodāsa was current in some circles before this *śloka* was included in the Brahma Purāṇa. According to the story, a Divodāsa, king of Vārāṇasī, had to leave his town because of a curse pronounced by a certain Nikumbha. He established then another capital on the bank of the Gomatī river⁹³. The abandoned city was occupied by Kṣemaka, a *rākṣasa* and by the Haihaiya king Bhadrāśreṇya. The Kāśīs and the Haihaiyas fought long over Vārāṇasī and the latter were victorious for some time. Only a few generations later, Alarka, a descendant of Divodāsa, defeated the *rākṣasa* and conquered the town. The story as narrated by the Brahma Purāṇa reflects both the religious and the political aspects of the tensions and fighting; the Harivaṃśa, the Vāyu and the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas give instead prominence to the religious causes. From these texts it

appears that Divodāsa is at the centre of a radical transformation of the town both in its political and in its religious aspects. The time of his life and the details of his deeds are shrouded in darkness. His story, however, gives a glimpse into the cultural and religious history of Vārāṇasī, namely into the traditional cult of Yakṣas, whose offshoots are still recognizable in many a popular cult to the trees and the 'vīrs' of nowadays and constitute a great suggestion to the tradition of another Kāśī on the Gomati's river banks : a tradition which is mentioned also in Mahābhārata Bhīṣma Parva 10.40. The Kāśī Khaṇḍa (95-96) and other Purāṇas speak also of Vyāsa at Vārāṇasī.

The Mahābhārata, partly contemporaneous and partly antecedent to the Purāṇas mentions a king of Kāśī, an ally of the Paṇḍavas, during the Great War. On the other hand, the Bhāgavata and the Viṣṇu Purāṇas⁸⁴, referring to a story preceding the Mahābhārata war, narrate an episode of enmity between a king of Kāśī and Kṛṣṇa which resulted in the burning of the town by Kṛṣṇa's disc. All this seems to imply again a touch of cultural and religious history and may reflect a time when Kṛṣṇa was becoming a powerful figure in Northern India. To draw from this information any fixed historical conclusion seems, however, rather hazardous.

The *Jātakas*, which can be accepted as a good witness to the importance of Vārāṇasī before the Buddha and are older than the present Purāṇas and Mahābhārata, describe the town as one of the sixteen *Janapadas* or kingdoms. It apparently became very large and rich in merchants. It conquered the kingdom of Videha in Mithilā (Bihar), but it was later taken under Kośalā. The town was surely very famous as a place of retreat and as a centre of learning at the time of the Buddha and the Upaniṣads. A tradition speaks of the Tīrthāṅkara Parśvanātha, as a citizen of Vārāṇasī in the VIII Cent. B.C., and of Mahāvīra Coming several times to Vārāṇasī in the VI Cent. B.C.⁸⁵. Brahmadatta, the king constantly mentioned in the *Jātakas* as reigning in Vārāṇasī during the different births of the Buddha, was probably not a single king but rather the name of a *vaṁśa* which reigned in Vārāṇasī in the centuries before the Buddha. But Vārāṇasī in this period is less famous for its political strength—always precarious throughout its history—or for its religious importance than for its trade and commercial activities. Kāśī's fabric, called Kāśīkuttama and Kāśīya, were made, cotton

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was cultivated and cloth, silk, perfumes, wood and ivory articles were abundantly produced. Kāśikā sandal was well-known. Different roads, among which the famous 'Uttarāpath', put Vārāṇasī in contact with Śrāvastī, Taxilā, Rājgrha and with the sea.⁸⁶ These pieces of information are gathered mainly from the Jātakas, so they are not to be taken as fully free from doubt, yet they are enough to show that Vārāṇasī was greatly famous as a trading centre.

II. From the Buddha to the Ghaḍavālas (V Cent. B. C.-XII Cent. A.D.)

Vārāṇasī becomes unmistakably an important centre at the time of the Buddha. The first disciples and later many other Buddhist monks made Sārnāth their place of meditation for attaining Nirvāṇa. From the history of the neighbouring states, Magadha and Kośala, and from the archaeological finds at Rājghaṭ we can follow the course of events at Vārāṇasī. At the end of the Vth and beginning of the IV Cent. B. C. Nāgadāsaka's minister, Śīśunāga, begins a *vaṃśa* and puts his son at Vārāṇasī. The short dynasty ends with the rise of the Nandas, who captured power from the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas for more popular and lower caste people. This change naturally also influenced Vārāṇasī as well as the Buddhist, Jaina and Hindu currents which become stronger. Among the great Mauryas who immediately followed the Nandas in the rule over Vārāṇasī, Aśoka made a *dharmaśāstrā* to Sārnāth and had *stūpas* built or offered as votive presents. Rājghaṭ and Sārnāth are rich in remains of this epoch and show that the city was very active. Among the remains of this period particularly interesting are some small ring-stones (*chakki*) on which a goddess is prominently depicted. These figurines, which became more numerous a century later under the Śuṅgas, undoubtedly show an interest of the people in a popular cult well spread in the whole country and remind us that originally Vārāṇasī was not a Vedic centre and such it must have remained for a long time.

After the Mauryas little is known of Vārāṇasī for at least two centuries. Patañjali depicts Vārāṇasī as the victorious : 'Jitvarī' and as a place of merchants while the unearthing of Indo-Greek coins and seals at Rājghaṭ prove that the Greeks stopped and did their shopping at Vārāṇasī while on their way to Pāṭaliputra against the Śuṅga king, Puṣyamitra.

During the first century B. C. Vārāṇasī was under the control of Kauśambī and in the 1st, Century A.D. it came under suzerainty of

the Kuṣāṇas. Two inscriptions of the time of Kaṇiṣka and the Mahāmāyūri text of the third century prove the persistence of Buddhism on one side and of the *yakṣu* religion on the other. It is in this period that Śaivism, already existent in Vārāṇasī but closely associated only with *tapas* and asceticism, gets relevance as a popular religion. The Mahābhārata does not give particular prominence to Vārāṇasī. The town had not yet become apparently the prominent *tīrtha* so famous in the following centuries. The Vārāṇasī of the Kuṣāṇa as well as of the Gupta period is very rich in artistic finds which reproduce mostly Bodhisattvas, yakṣas and nāgas.

The Gupta period was for Vārāṇasī as for the rest or the territories under the great empire, an epoch of Hindu revival after centuries of Buddhism. "It was a time of great religious vitality and the blossoming of creativity, both literary and artistic"⁸⁷. Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* gained popularity as proved by the finds at Rājghaṭ, while at the same time Buddhism continued to flourish, assuming the Tāntrāyāma tradition, as the Tārās in this period at Sārāth seem to attest. The *Takṣadharmā* apparently lost ground, while evidence of other cults, such as the cults of Skanda and Sūrya begins to appear. But it is the *Śaivadharmā* that becomes predominant and the first purāṇic *māhātmyas* of Vāyu and Matsya Purāṇas speak of the greatness of *Avimukta*. Vārāṇasī finally evolves as a great *tīrtha* where hundreds of Śiva *lingas* are established, the *ghāṭs* increase in importance, among which perhaps Maṇikarṇikā begin to become predominant⁸⁸. But contemporaneously Vārāṇasī continues in its century-old tradition of trade, banking, commerce : the imperial unity of the Gupta could not but favour this aspect of the life of Vārāṇasī. As a centre of teaching, where the *caturvidyā* and the *Sāmaveda* in particular are studied, Vārāṇasī became more and more important; it did not take much time for the holy city to overtake all the great centres, like Taxilā and Nālandā, which had preceded it in time.

The early medieval period sees Vārāṇasī passing from one ruler to an other : first it is under the Maukharis of Kanauj for almost two centuries, then it falls into the hands of Lalitāditya, king of Kashmir as it appears from the Rājatarāṅgiṇī and the coins at Rājghaṭ. Subsequently it came under the jurisdiction of the Gurjara Pratihāra kings and finally in the early eleventh century under Gaṅgeyadeva. It was in this period that in 1033 A. D. for the first time a group of Turkish-Muslims led by Nialtagin looted

for only a few hours the holy city. This medieval period sees the progress of Vārāṇasī as a great *tīrtha* and an important centre. The Kuṭṭanīmatam of Dāmodara Gupta gives already a hint to this greatness. The description of Hiuen-Tsang of Vārāṇasī 'full of trees and streams, impressive for the beauty as well as its religious and intellectual life', where most of the Hindus worship Maheśvara Deva, depicts a town in its full blossoming. The inscription of Pantha of the eight century mentions again Avimukta and speaks of Candra doing his *tapas* here, of the goddess Bhavānī (Caṇḍī) and tantricism. Śaivism was now coloured by the rise of the Śāktas, and Buddhism became full of Bodhisattvas and goddesses (tantric). Ascetics and pilgrims poured into the holy city in great numbers. Scholars and philosophers went to check their doctrines with the Paṇḍits and saints of the sacred city. The Ādi Śaṅkarācārya also came here and according to some he might have here composed his commentary to the Brahma Sūtras. The *purāṇa mātmyas* of this period become more extensive and reflect the active religious and cultural life of the town where temples were continuously consecrated, ponds and images offered to the deity.

III. From the Gahaḍavālas to the British Rājya (XII-XVIII A. D)

The Gahaḍavālas gave to Vārāṇasī a short but glorious period of political predominance as well. The first king, Candradeva⁸⁹, at the end of eleventh century, claimed "*inter alia*" to be protector of Vārāṇasī and here most probably he put his capital although Kanauj was also an administrative centre. Unfortunately at Rājghaṭ the layer of the Gahaḍavālas' period was almost completely destroyed before the excavations of the Archaeological Dept. started and so an accurate work on this layer is impossible. The greatest of the Gahaḍavālas, Govindacandra, ruled for over forty years in the early twelfth century and resided on the Rājghaṭ plateau. His minister Lakṣmīdhara fixed the rules of *dharmaśāstra* in the first *Nibandha* that has come down to us, the *Kṛtyakalpataru*. Kṛṣṇa Mīśra composed his Prabodhacandrāya to help improve the morals of the habitants and Dāmodara wrote his Uktivyakti Prakaraṇa in which he gives many interesting hints about cultural, religious and daily life of Vārāṇasī of this epoch. Under the Gahaḍavālas the king had unlimited power and imposed many heavy taxes on his subjects. More and more Vārāṇasī became a

centre for learning Vedas, Grammar and Philosophy while its language assumed more importance and a more specific shape as it appears from Dāmodara's Utkivyakti Prakaraṇa. The description of the town as found in the works of this period depicts it in a way not very different from its present situation: good houses, women cooking rice, pūrī, vegetables, khicaḍī, *grhasthas* doing everything, veneration of cows, many children, servants, amusements in great quantity, a little more of untouchability and a great deal of business. Religiously the town is solidly anchored to the *Savadharma* but kings are very generous also towards the Vaiṣṇava temples and Govindacandra was surely a Vaiṣṇava. Tantricism was also in full flower and Buddhism was influenced by the Vajrayāna. The *Tīrthavivekanakāṇḍa* of the *Kṛtyakalpataru*, and most probably the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* attached to in the Skanda Purāṇa, depict a town full of temples, *tīrthas*, *liṅgas*, religiously very active, a centre for many pilgrims, and at the apogee of its greatness.

This glorious period ended tragically when in 1194 Jayacandra went to meet Muhammed Ghauri's general Qutb-ud-din Aibak in battle. He was defeated and beheaded. The Turkish-Afghan Muslim forces arrived and destroyed nearly a thousand temples. The political splendour of Vārāṇasī waned; for almost seven hundred years the holy city remained under Muslim rule until it came into British hands. But its religious power did not diminish, it rather increased, as Vārāṇasī became in the hearts and minds of every Hindu the ideal centre of orthodoxy and holiness.

The history of the Muslim centuries is complicated. Not all the Muslim dynasties were uncompromising with the Hindus and so Vārāṇasī witnessed moments of complete religious freedom as well as destruction of hundreds of temples at a time.

During the Delhi Sultanate Vārāṇasī had become simply a district capital under the larger province of Jaunpur. In the 1230s the Viśveśvara temple was destroyed and on its site a mosque was built.

During the Tughlaq reign in the 1300s the town was partly destroyed by Feroze Shah Tughlaq, and again many temples were demolished when Vārāṇasī came under the control of the Sharki rulers of Jaunpur in 1400s. During the moments of calm, temples and *liṅgas* were rebuilt by the Hindus but they were again destroyed by the next wave of invaders.

The Lodis who seized power from the Sharkis continued the work of destruction of the previous dynasties and once again the Viśveśvara temple was destroyed.

A great sigh of relief was surely heaved in the 1500s when Akbar granted more religious freedom. The Rājputs Mān Singh and Toḍarmal entered the imperial service and rebuilt *ghāṭs* and temples. The Viśveśvara was rebuilt under the supervision of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, the *Nibandhakāra*. But Akbar's successors, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, once again returned to an uncompromising policy and once again thousands of temples were demolished—in 1669 the temple of Viśvanātha, which had replaced the Viśveśvara, was also destroyed—and an attempt was even made to re-name the town as Muhammadabad. The beautiful town of the twelfth century had disappeared. It was to be rebuilt slowly under the Marathas in the following centuries. And yet despite the repeated waves of destruction Vārāṇasī kept burning the light of its intellectual and religious life. The *Kāśī Rahasya*, the *Kāśī Kedāra Māhātmya* were composed in this period, as well as the *Tristhalīselu*, *Tarkasaṅgraha*, *Siddhānta Kaumudī*, *Gaiṅā Laharī* of Jagannātha, the translation in Persian of the Upaniṣads by Dāra Shikoh. The *bhakti* movement went on gaining strength and Vārāṇasī, although remaining a stronghold of conservatorism and orthodoxy, gave shelter to Rāmānanda, Kabīr, Raidās, Tulśdās, Caitanya and Guru Nanak. Even in religious changes Vārāṇasī remained a centre of attraction for the greatest leaders. The descriptions of Bernier and Tavernier, between 1660 and 1665 and the *Gīrvānapadamañjarī* and *Gīrvānavānmañjarī* written by Varadarāja and Dhunḍirāja respectively give a vivid picture of the town under the Muslims in XVII A.D. and reflect the blissful unconcern of the paṇḍits for all the political and social events.

IV. The British period and the Kāśirāja (From XVIII Cent. A. D.)

The XVIII Century A. D. saw the decline and shattering of the Moghul Empire. Parallel was a revival of Hindu traditions. Vārāṇasī fell under the influence of the Marathas (1734-1785). The Peshwas began to build *ghāṭs* and increase their influence on the town to which they had flown already since the time of Akbar. They tried to dominate the *Tristhalī*, namely the three highly sacred

areas of Gayā, Kāśī and Prayāga, but they had to cede them to the British a short time later.

The Sikhs also had their hands on Vārāṇasī for a time and built Gurudvāras. But the greatest event of XVIII Century A.D. was the rising of the present Kāśirājya. With the decline of the government in Delhi, Vārāṇasī first came under the rule of the Nawabs of Oudh in 1722 and later became the seat of Mansa Rām, the founder of the present Kāśirājya, which he gained cleverly in 1725. Balvant Singh, his successor, established an independent state, which for about forty years remained the centre of attention and a source of trouble for the rising East India Company. The tension between the two powers reached its acme when exactly two centuries ago, in 1781, Chet Singh, Balvant Singh's son from his Rājput wife, who had usurped the throne, put Lord Warren Hastings in serious danger. The action was not continued and Chet Singh was not supported by other Rājās, but Vārāṇasī, which later did not create any big problem for the East India Company, even in 1857, was for a moment on the point of breaking with the increasing power of the foreign Company. In 1775 Vārāṇasī was ceded to the East India Company by the Nawab of Oudh and in 1794 was brought directly under the administration of the Company.

With this revival the town began to flourish again. The present Viśvanātha temple was built in 1777 by Rānī Ahilya Bāi of Indore who built many other temples here. The urban area of the city continued to develop along the river southward and westward, mesonry bridges were built on the Gaṅgā and the Varnā river, many ponds like Benyā, Maidāgin and Macchodarī and the Godoulia Nālā were drained and replaced by parks or streets, while many houses were demolished to widen the roads in the centre of the city. Slowly the town came to have its present shape.

Although the British Empire, Vārāṇasī kept alive its traditional love for culture, trade and religious festivals. Mahārāja Śvarī Prasād Narain Singh (1835-1889 A. D.), the top representative of Vārāṇasī culture in his times, was a patron of fine arts and a great lover and connoisseur of music and poetry. From different corners of India and of the world people came to Vārāṇasī and a number of educational institutions were patronized by the Government, Rāmakrishna Mission, Theosophical Society, Ārya Samāj, and great men like Madan Mohan Malaviya, Udai Pratap Singh,

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Bhartendu Harischandra, Sheo Prasad Gupta helped increasing the importance of the city. In 1791 the Sanskrit College was founded, in 1893 the Nagari Pracharini Sabha was started, in 1916 the Banaras Hindu University was founded by Madan Mohan Malaviya incorporating the previous Hindu College founded by Annie Besant in 1897. In 1920 Mahatma Gandhi opened the Kasi Vidyapeeth. Varanasi as in previous centuries, remained the centre of bankers, traders and nobility from different parts of India.

After Independence no substantial change took place in the city, which has always been able to remain at the top of the world without overpowering its neighbours through political devices. Its tradition of freedom and love for learning and culture has been kept alive for centuries and is still its greatest distinction.

3. THE VĀRĀṆASĪ OF THE PURĀNAS*

Vārāṇasī or Kāśī is highly praised and exalted in the purāṇic literature.

For the Purāṇas, Kāśī is a microcosm of the whole universe. Here the eight directions⁹⁰ as well as the lords of the planets, sun and moon⁹¹ had their origin or came to live. Here all the gods are said to inhabit because they are captivated by the charm of the city⁹² : the sixty-four *yoginīs*, the nine *Śaktis* and *Durgās*, eight *Bhairavas*, Brahmā⁹³, Viṣṇu⁹⁴ and naturally Śiva, personally and through thousands of *liṅgas*⁹⁵ ; all around the town in seven concentric circles are disposed 56 Gaṇeśas or Vighneśas along the eight directions to remove obstacles⁹⁶, while Śiva's fearful *gaṇas* are disposed along the entire route of the *Pañcakrośī* Road to guard the city and deny entry to any sinners.

Kāśī is also considered as a microcosm of the whole of India's sacred geography by the Purāṇas. All the *tīrthas* are said to be present in Kāśī and Kāśī is said to be present at other *tīrthas* in India :

तीर्थानि सर्वाणि पुरीश्च सर्वास्तथा शिवस्याऽऽयतनानि षष्टिः ।

नद्यो नदाः सरसः सागराश्च देवाः समेता मुनयश्च सर्वे ॥54॥

वसन्ति काश्यां स्वविमुक्तिकामाः कामारिसम्प्राप्तमहत्प्रभावाः ।

दृष्ट्वा हि काशीं रमते मनो न तीर्थेषु चान्येषु सदैव तेषाम् ॥55॥

Nilakaṇṭha Sarasvatī in his *ṭīkā* to the Kāśī Rahasya explains :

स्थूलरूपेण पृथक् स्थिता अपि सूक्ष्मरूपेण काश्यामपि स्थिता इति ।

Of the seven towns said to bestow *mokṣa*, the other six would only cause one to reach Kāśī.⁹⁸

Kāśī is not only a concentrated space, it is also a fullness of time for the Purāṇas; here it is always *Kṛta Yuga* :

सदा कृतयुगं चात्र महापर्व सदाञ्च वै ।⁹⁹

In Kāśī time is at a standstill, so whatever is done here is particularly holy and bestows more merit than in any other place :

* This point is based on Diana L. Eck, *Banāras : the City of Light*, cf. Bibliography.

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मासोपवासादन्यत्र यत्फलं समुपाज्यते ।
 श्रद्धयैकोपवासेन तत्काश्यां स्यादसंशयम् ॥¹⁰⁰

“Here sleep is yoga, going about the town is sacrifice, eating whatever one pleases is the great *nivedya* food offering to the gods. One’s play is a holy act of charity. Everyday conversation is the repetition of God’s name. And lying in one’s bed is prostration.”¹⁰¹

Everything is transformed and transfigured in Kāśī, in the purāṇic vision, because everything is done in a religious context.¹⁰² Kāśī, therefore, is Brahman¹⁰³, is the inner ‘place’, deep within ourselves¹⁰⁴, at the centre of space and time; it is the supreme wisdom, the meeting place of heaven and the beyond¹⁰⁵, where one realises oneself¹⁰⁶. Everybody desires to come to Vārāṇasī and remain for ever (*Kāśīvāsa*) because to die here means to achieve *mukti*¹⁰⁷.

FOOTNOTES

1. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmasāstra*, Poona, Vol. IV., 1953, p. 618.
2. Diana L. Eck, *Banāras : the City of Light*, Thesis, 1976, p. 6.
3. आनन्दकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति देवा धर्माख्यकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति विप्राः ।
 अथार्थकाननमिति प्रवदन्ति लोकाः कामारिकाननमिति प्रतिकृतकामाः ॥
4. For her book and for those of the following authors see Bibliography.
5. See a discussion on this problem in K. N. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the ages*, Varanasi, 1974, pp. 1 ff.
6. TV p. 31.
7. TV p. 13; Sk. IV. 26. 131.
8. According to Pd. V. 14.192 ‘Varuṇā’.
9. K. I. 29.62; Pd I. 33.49.
10. N. II. 48.19; Mt. 182.62; 183.40 etc.
11. According to Mt. 182.62 and 184.40 ‘Śuklanadī’.
12. Mt. 183.73; see also Tīrthacintāmaṇī pp. 351-52, 367.
13. Bhīṣma Parva 9.31; VI. 10.30.

14. For the problem of the vedic river Varāṇavatī identified with the Varāṇasi on which Kāśī would have been situated see *Cambridge History of India*, vol. I, p. 117. This opinion agreed by P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmasāstra*, Poona, vol. IV, p. 619 is contradicted by K.N. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, Varanasi, 1974.
15. Vm. 3.26-30.
16. Sk. IV. 30.69.
17. Nāsī in place of Asī is available also in A. 112.6cd.
18. Sk. IV. 5.25-26.
19. Brd. Up. II. 1.1.; KaU IV. 1—For the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Atharva Veda see below, p. 15.
20. Vārt. 4. on Pāṇ. IV. 1.54.
21. Sk. VI. 22.84-85.
22. p. 377.
23. KR. 3.9.
24. *Indian Historical Tradition*, London, 1920.
25. cf. Diana L. Eck, *Banāras : the City of Light*, Thesis, vol. I.p. 47.
26. Mt. 179.54; L. 92.45 ef.-46 ab; 92.104; K. I. 29.56.
27. Sk. IV. 26.27; Ś. II. 1.6.30.
28. Sk. IV. 39.73.
29. Sk. IV. 39.76 cf. also 77.
30. cf. also K. I. 29.55-60.
31. Ś. IV. 22.21.
32. L. 92.143.
33. K. I. 29.43 cd.
34. KR. 16.34 cd.
35. Sk. IV. 26.34.
36. Tīkā to KR. 6.40.
37. KR. 3.344
38. KR. 2.28; 3.33
39. KR. 3.38
40. Sk. IV. 26. 37; Mt. 180.24-44; L. I. 92.
41. KR. 14.39 (trans. of Diana L. Eck.)
42. Sk. IV. 52.19-21
43. Sk. 52.22ab
44. KR. 6.39-40.
45. KR. 3.37-38; cf. Sk. IV. 3.75, 78

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46. KR. 7.21cd.
47. Sk. IV. 55.34.
48. Sk. IV. 30.100.
49. KR. 14.41.
50. cf. Sk. IV. 96.103ff; IV. 64.47; TS p. 308; L. I. 92.39cd.
51. Sk. IV. 53.96.
52. Mt. 179.74cd; L. I. 92.43 etc.
53. DBhg. III. 24.11; KK. 3.121, 136; A. 112.7; K. I. 29.47;
Sk. IV. 64.49.
54. K. I. 28.61.
55. N. II. 48.5, 54 etc.
56. TS. p. 184.
57. N. 48.11.
58. KR. 14.64a.
59. 16.50.
60. KR. 6.41.
61. Sk. II. 2.12.21-40.
62. cf. Diana L. Eck, *op. cit.*, I, 469.
63. Ś. IV. 23.16cd; Mt. 179.74; KR. 25.95 etc.
64. DBhg. VII. 24.13-24.
65. Sk. IV. 32.113; Ś. IV. 23.46.
66. Pd. VI. 235.38; cf. Mt. 180.18; Ś. IV. 23.51.
67. Ś. IV. 23.51 cf. Nirvāṇanāgarī and Mokṣalakṣmī, Sk. IV.
64.49, 50.
68. Sk. IV. 30.104.
69. Pd. VI. 206.69.
70. Sv. p. 374.
71. DBhg. VII. 30.55.
72. Mahābhāṣya IV. 3.72, quoted in Sukul, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
73. Śabdakalpadrūma, s. v. Vārāṇasī.
74. Ś. IV, 23.1; Pd. II. 41.2.
75. Sukul, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
76. cf. KR., Setubandhaṭikā on 8.68 which quotes Sk., Nagara
Khaṇḍa.
77. cf. Exc., p. 19.
78. cf. Exc., p. 19.
79. Exc. p. 17.
80. ib. p. 80.
81. cf. B. 11.40-54

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82. cf. I.2.3
83. Cf. the two Kāsīs in Mbh., Bhīṣma Parva 10.40
84. X. 66 and V. 34 respectively. For references to the Mbh see Motichandra, specially pp. 24-26.
85. See Motichandra 38 who refers to Kalpaūtra 6. 149-169.
86. See Motichandra, *Kāśī kā Itihās*, Bombay, 1962, pp. 48-49.
87. Diana L. Eck, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
88. Motichandra, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
89. But see Motichandra, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
90. KK. 10-13.
91. Sk. IV. 14-18; 46-51.
92. Sk. IV. 39-64.
93. Sk. IV. 52.
94. Sk. IV. 26.
95. Sk. IV. 69, 73, 97.
96. Sk. IV. 57.58 ff.
97. KR. 13.54-55.
98. KKh.
99. Sk. IV. 22.86 ab.
100. Sk. IV. 39.13.
101. Quoted in Diana L. Eck., *Kāśī, City and Symbol, Purāṇam (Vārāṇasī)*, vol. XX, No. 2 (July, 1978), p. 190.
102. Sk. 22.88.
103. KR. 7.65.
104. KR. 2.28.
105. Cf. *Purāṇam, op. cit.*, p. 186.
106. KR. 2.31.
107. KR. 25.95.

Appendices

MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENTS AT VĀRĀṆASĪ*

- Suparśvanātha, the 7th Jain Tīrthaṅkar, was born in Kāśī.
- 9th Century B. C. —Date of the 1st layer of the Excavations at Rāj-ghāṭ (Kāśī)
- 8th Century B. C. —Paraśvanātha, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara, was born in Kāśī
- 6th Century B. C. —The first preaching of the Buddha at Sārnāth.
- 7th to 1st Centuries Annexion of Kāśī to Kośalā, Magadha, B. C. —Kausambī. Nanda rule. Kuṣāṇa rule.
- 240 B. C. —Emperor Aśoka visited Kāśī.
- 4th Century A. D. —Gupta rule.
- 5th Century A. D. —Fa-Hien visited Kāśī.
- 490 A. D. —Building of Viśveśvara temple (perhaps for the first time
- 6th Century A. D. —Jangambarī *maṭha*, the chief *maṭha* of Vīraśaivism was established.
- 7th Century A. D. —Hiuen-Tsang visited Kāśī.
- 8th Century A. D. —Śaṅkarācārya stayed in Kāśī and composed the Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya. Perhaps he visited the city twice.
—Rule of the Palas.
- 9th Century A. D. —The rule of the Pratihāras.
- 10th Century A. D. —The rule of the Chedis.
- 1013 A. D. —Ahmad Nialtagin plundered the city and demolished temples.
- 12th Century A. D. —Rule of the Gahaḍavālas—Rāmānuja visited Kāśī.
- 1194 A. D. —Qutb-ud-din-Aibak demolished the Viśveśvara
- 13th Century A. D. —Ala-ud-din Khilsi demolished one thousand Hindu temples.
- 1294 A. D. —Sant Jñāneśvara visited Kāśī.
- 13-14th Century A. D. —Rāmānanda settled in Kāśī, lived and taught on the Pañcagaṅgā ghāṭ, founded a sub-division of Vaiṣṇavism.

*Taken from : Vidyarthi, L. P., Makhan Jha, B. N. Saraswati, *The Sacred Complex of Kāshi*, see Bibliography. Some slight changes have been introduced,

- 15th Century A. D.—Raidās became the disciple of Rāmānanda. Sharqui's rule. Lodi's and Suri's possession.
- 1440 A. D. —Kabīr was born near Lahartāra tank (Vārāṇasī)
- 1469-1539 A. D. —Guru Nanak visited the city and had *śāstrārtha* with the *paṇḍits* of Kāśī.
- 1478-1530 A. D. —Vallabhācārya settled here in the later part of his life and died in Kāśī.
- 1485-1533 A. D. —Caitanya lived here for many years.
- 1494 A. D. —Sikandar Lodi invaded the city and demolished one thousand temples.
- 1532-1623 A. D. —Tulsidās composed the Rāmacaritamānas between 1574 and 1584 and died here in 1623 A. D.
- 1567 A. D. —Akbar defeated Jaichandra, king of Kāśī, and established a mint.
- 1575 A. D. —Restoration of the Viśvanāth temple by Toḍarmal.
- 1600 A. D. —Construction of Mān Mandir *ghāṭ* and of nearly one thousand temples by Rāja Man Singh of Jaipur.
- 1628 A. D. —Renovation of Jñānavāpī by Baija Baie, the Maharani of Gwalior.
- 17th Century A.D.—Shahjahan demolished several temples.
- 1655-1656 A.D. —Dāra Shikoh translated the *Upaniṣads* in Persian with the help of 150 *paṇḍits* of Kāśī.
- 1664 A. D. —Battle of Jñānavāpī between the Daśanāmi Nāga Sannyāsis and the army of Aurangzeb. Shivaji found a refuge with the Brāhmaṇas of Kāśī on his flight from the imperial court of Aurangzeb.
- 1669 A. D. —Aurangzeb demolished the temples of Viśvanātha and Veṇī Mādhava and erected mosques on those sites.
- 1697 A. D. —Rāja Jai Singh of Jaipur built the observatory at Mānmandir.
- 17th Century A.D.—Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Kāśī.
- 1722 A. D. —The rule of the Nawab of Oudh.
- 1725 A. D. —Establishment of Kāshirāja.
- 1752 A. D. —The building of the fort of Rāmnaḡar.

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- 1773 A. D. —Warren Hastings' visit to Kāśī.
 1777 A. D. —Ahilya Baie, the Maharani of Indore, constructed the present golden temple of Viśvanātha.
 1781 A. D. —Chet Singh escapes from prison.
 1791 A. D. —Construction of Maṇikarṇikā *ghāṭ*.
 —Foundation of Sanskrit Pāṭhaśālā.
 1794 A. D. —The formation of Municipal Board.
 1810 A.D. —Protest against the *ghor-chari* tax.
 1817 A.D. —Mahārāja Jainarayan Ghosal opened the first English school.
 1839 A.D. —The Viśvanāth temple was gilded by Mahārāja Ranjit Singh of Punjab.
 1845 A.D. —Marwari Hindu Hospital was established.
 1852 A.D. —Gorashahi movement. Demolition of *barah phatak* (twelve gates) in Madanpura.
 1855 A.D. —Wajid Ali Shah visited Kashi
 1857 A.D. —Mutiny.
 1862 A.D. —Rail link between Moghulsarai and Vārāṇasi.
 1866 A.D. —Organization of the Mahāpālikā.
 1868 A.D. —Śrī Rāmakrishna Paramahansa visited Kāśī.
 1869 A.D. —Swami Dayanand visited Kāśī.
 1866-1885 A.D. —Bhartendu Hariscandra lived in Kāśī.
 1872 A.D. —First Census.
 1887 A.D. —Opening of rail-cum-road bridge on the Gaṅgā (Dūffrin Bridge), which is now known as Malaviya Bridge.
 1888 A.D. —Establishment of the Church Missionary Society.
 1891 A.D. —Ramahalla movement.
 1892 A.D. —Water works.
 1893 A.D. —Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā was founded.
 1897 A.D. —The Hindu College was founded by Mrs. Annie Besant.
 1902 A.D. —The Bhārata Dharma Mahāmaṇḍala was established by Swāmi Jñānānanda.
 1905 A.D. —Foundation of the Syādvāda Mahāvidyālaya.
 1909 A.D. —Banaras Hindu Society was founded.
 1916 A.D. —Foundation of Banāras Hindu University.

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- 1917 A.D. —Mahatms Gandhi's first political speech in the
Banāras Hindu University.
- 1918 A.D. —First aeroplane was seen.
- 1920 A.D. —Foundation of Kāshi Vidyāpīṭh by Mahātma
Gandhi.
- 1928 A.D. —Electrification.
- 1934 A.D. —Earthquak on 15 January.
- 1937 A.D. —Opening of Bhārata Mātā Mandir by Mahātma
Gandhi.
- 1941 A.D. —Establishment of Dharma Saṅgha by Swāmi
Karpātri.
- 1942 A.D. —Quit India mouement.
- 1947 A.D. —Independence.
- 1958 A.D. —Conversion of Sanskrit College into Sanskrit
University, at present known as Saṁpūrnā-
nanda Saṁskṛta Viśvavidyālaya.

काशिराजवंशावलिः

ब्रह्मपुराण	ब्रह्माण्ड	हरिवंश	भागवत
अ० ११.३५-५९, मध्यभाग अ० ६७.१-७८	हरिवंशपर्व अ० २९.६-३७ ९ १७.१-९		
पुरूरवस्	पुरूरवस्	पुरूरवस्	पुरूरवस्
आयुः	आयुः	आयुः	आयुः
क्षत्रवृद्ध (वृद्धशर्मा)	क्षत्रवृद्ध	क्षत्रवृद्ध (वृद्धशर्मा)	क्षत्रवृद्ध
सुनहोत्र	सुनहोत्र	सुनहोत्र	सुहोत्रः
काशः	काशः	काशः	काश्यः
काशिपः	काशिपः	काशयः	काशिः
दीर्घतपाः	दीर्घतपाः	दीर्घतपाः	[राष्ट्र]
धनुः	धन्वः	धन्वः	दीर्घतमः
धन्वन्तरि म. भा.	धन्वन्तरिः	धन्वन्तरिः	धन्वन्तरिः
केतुमान्	केतुमान्	केतुमान्	केतुमान्
भीमरथ	भीमरथ	भीमरथ	भीमरथ
दिवोदास म. भा.	दिवोदास	दिवोदास	दिवोदास
प्रतर्दन म. भा.	प्रतर्दन	प्रतर्दन	[द्युमान्। (शत्रु जित् वत्स, ऋषध्वज, कुवल्याश्व)
वत्स म. भा.	वत्स	वत्स	प्रतर्दन
अलर्क म. भा.	अलर्क	अलर्क	अलर्कः
सन्नति	सन्नति	सन्नति	सन्ततिः
सुनीथ	सुनीथ	सुनीथ	सुनीथ
क्षेम	क्षेम	क्षेम्य	×
केतुमान् म. भा.	केतुमान्	केतुमान्	×
सुकेतु	सुकेतु	सुकेतु	सुकेतन
धर्मकेतु	धर्मकेतु	धर्मकेतु	धर्मकेतु
सत्यकेतु	सत्यकेतु	सत्यकेतु	सत्यकेतु
विभु	विभु	विभु	धृष्टकेतु
आनर्त्त	सुविभुः	आनर्त्त	×
सुकुमार	सुकुमार	सुकुमार	सुकुमार
धृष्टकेतु	धृष्टकेतु	धृष्टकेतु	×
वेणुहोत्र	वेणुहोत्र	वेणुहोत्र	वीतिहोत्र
भार्ग	गार्ग्य	भार्ग	भार्ग

(34)

वायु. २.३०.१-७४
 पुरुरवाः
 आयुः
 धर्मवृद्धः
 सुतहोत्र
 काशः
 काशि
 राष्ट्र
 दीर्घतपाः
 धर्म
 धन्वन्तरिः
 केतुमात्
 भीमरथ
 दिवोदास
 प्रतर्दन
 वत्स
 अलकं
 सन्तति
 सुनीथ
 सुकेतु
 धर्मकेतु
 सत्यकेतु
 विभु
 सुविभु
 सुकुमार
 धृष्टकेतु
 वेणुहोत्र
 गार्ग्यः
 गार्गभूमि

विष्णु पु. ४.८.२१ गद्यम्
 पुरुरवाः
 आयुः
 क्षत्रवृद्धः
 सुहोत्र
 काशः
 काशेयः
 राष्ट्र
 दीर्घतपाः
 X
 धन्वन्तरिः
 केतुमात्
 भीमरथ
 दिवोदास
 प्रतर्द (शत्रुजित् वत्स ऋतुध्वज
 X कुयलयाश्च)
 अलकं
 सन्तति
 सुनीथ
 सुकेतु
 धर्मकेतु
 सत्यकेतु
 विभु
 सुविभुः
 सुकुमारः
 धृष्टकेतु
 वीतिहोत्र
 भार्गो
 भार्गभूमि

PLACES OF INTEREST FOR TOURISTS AND PILGRIMS

1. ANNAPŪRṆA—A temple and a *maṭh* built on the site of the ancient Bhuvaneśvarī temple in the XVI Cent. A. D. by the Rājā of Puṇe. She is one of the nine Durgās called by the name of Mahāgaūrī. Under the name of Bhavānī she was the most venerated among the female deities in Vārāṇasī. The temple is close to the Viśvanātha Mandir, right in the centre of the city.

See : *KKh* 61.123ff (Bhavānī); *Havell*, 173ff; *Sherring* 43ff, 57ff; *Sukul* (1974) 188.189; (1977) 87,239f., 334.

2. ASSI—Assi is a river at the southernmost border of Vārāṇasī and delimits its boundaries. In the texts it is sometimes called *Suṣkanadī* and is one of the *Pañcatīrthas*. According to several purāṇas Vārāṇasī is supposed to have derived its name from its situation between the Varuṇā and the Asī rivers. The *Ghāṭ* at the confluence of the Assi with Gaṅgā was built by the Mahārājas of Banāras.

See : *KKh* 48.107-110; *Mt* 185.65-66 (*Pañcatīrtha*); *A* 112.6; *Jab. Up.* 2; *K. I.* 31.63; *KKh* 5.25; 30.69-70; *Mt* 183.62; *N* II. 48.19; 50.33; 51.6; *Pd* I. 33.49; *V.* 14.191; *TS* 161; *Vm* 3.27; 15.50-53; 16.52.

3. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY : See Universities

4. BHĀRATA MĀTĀ MANDIR : Although considered a temple, it is not dedicated to any deity. It only has a map of India (*Bhārata*) engraved on the floor. It was built by Śīva Prasād and inaugurated by Mahātma Gandhi in 1937 A. D.. It is situated in the premises of the Kāśī Vidyāpīṭha, not far from the Cantonment Railway Station.

5. BINDUMĀDHAVA : It was the most important Viṣṇu temple in Vārāṇasī. After its destruction in 1669 A. D. its mūrtis were taken to different places (see list of temples). The Rāma Mandir which was next to it was spared and is still open to visitors.

See : *KKh* 33.148; 60-61; *Mt* 185.68; *N* II. 29.61; *Pd* VI. 131.48; *Motichandra* 226ff.; 394; *Sukul* (1974) 186-187; (1977) 82-83; 349-350.

6. DAŚĀŚVAMEDHA (or Daśāvamedhikā). It is the central *Ghāṭ* of the town and the most populated. It can be easily

approached even by car from the crossing of Godaulia. Its previous name was Rudrasāras. According to *KKh* 52 here Brahmā himself performed ten *aśvamedha* sacrifices, thence its name. According to some historians, the Bhāraśivas were crowned here, and took their ceremonial bath in the Gaṅgā at the end of the *aśvamedha* sacrifices. The texts usually assign the merits of ten *aśvamedha* sacrifices to those who bathe here. It is one of the *Pañcatīrthas*.

See : *Bḍ* III. 13.45; *K* II. 37.26; *KKh* 52.66 ff.; *Mbh* III. 83.14; 85.87; *TS* 159, 207.

Jayaswal, *History of India* : 150 A. D.-350 A. D., p. 5; *Kane* (1953) 634-635; *Sukul* (1977) 66. 354.

7. DHUNḌHIRĀJA : This is the most important and renowned among the 56 Vināyakas surrounding and protecting the town in seven concentric circles as *Kṣetra Rakṣasas*. Cf. the list of Vināyakas given above.

see *KKh* 57; *TS* 198-199.

Motichandra 185; *Sukul* (1974) 190; (1977) 334, 348-349.

8. DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS (DLW)—India's Railway system is Asia's largest and the world's second largest system under one management, with a fleet of about 11,000 locomotives, 36,8000 coaches, and nearly 400,000 wagons. The Railway net work also includes 3 modern Rolling Stock Production Units : the Diesel Locomotive Works in Vārāṇasī is one of them. It commenced production in 1964 and has produced more than 1300 locomotives since then. It has a staff of approximately 7300 people and surrounding it is a township covering 480 acres, with 2842 houses for workers, a hospital, a cinema hall and a recreation centre, a sports stadium and play-grounds, an open air theatre, shopping centres, schools for nearly 5,000 children etc. Visitors to the plant are welcome; previous notice or arrangement is required.

9. DURGĀ (Kuṇḍa and Temple). One of the most popular temples. It is in the southern part of the town. At the time of its erection by the famous Marathi, Rani Bhavani, in XVIII century A. D. the monkeys living in the forest surrounding the site were left undisturbed, thence their great number even at present. For this reason foreigners use to call this temple 'Monkey temple'. It is visited especially on Tuesdays and in the two 'navarātris'. The

Durgā of this temple is called Kūṣmāṇḍā, known also as Baḍī Durgā.

see : *KKh* : 72.37-65, 81 ff.

Motichandra, 405; *Sherring* 157 ff; *Sukul* (1977) 86.

10. GANDHI INSTITUTE OF STUDIES (Rājghaṭ)—It is a recent construction built on the famous ruins of Rājghaṭ at the extreme north of the city not far from the Varṇā river and it is just at the beginning of the Malviya Bridge near the Kashi Railway Station.

11. GAṄGĀ: The river Gaṅgā constitutes the main attraction of Vārāṇasī and is one of its chief religious centres. People bathe, take ablutions and perform their religious duties in the holy river. A boat ride at sunrise is an uplifting experience for every visitor. Praises of Gaṅgā are found throughout the Purāṇas.

see : *K'ane* (1953) 585-524.

12. JÑĀNAVĀPĪ (Gyānvāpi)—A well situated between Viśvanātha temple (Golden temple) and the Razia Mosque (known also as Aurangzeb or Gyānvāpi Mosque). The Purāṇas say that it was created by Śiva's *trifūla* when the God dug for water to bathe in. It is believed that its water increases the 'jñāna', thence its name. To sprinkle Śivaliṅgas and to do *śrāddha* or *pīṭṭarapaṇa* with the water of this well is particularly meritorious. Popular tradition says that the *pūjāri* of the Viśveśvara temple threw himself into this well, along with the Śivaliṅga, to escape profanation from the hands of the Muslim destroyers. The well is surrounded by a columnade with forty pillars. It was created by Śrīmant Baiyā Bai of Gwalior in 1818. The huge Nandi near the well is a gift of the Rāja of Nepal, while the small temple at its Eastern side was built by the Rāni of Hyderabad. The Jñānavāpi is known also as Śivatīrtha, Jñānadatīrtha and Mokṣatīrtha.

see : *KKh* 33-34; 35.123; *TS* 148-150; *VM* 192-193; *Havell* 182; *Motichandra* 171; 226; 298f; 304, 315; 401; *Sherring* 53 ff; *Sukul* (1974) 183; (1977) 74-76; 233.

13. KĀLA BHAIRAVA—A temple dedicated to one of the 8 Bhairavas. He is considered the 'guardian' (*Kotwāl*) of the town. Veneration of Viśvanātha or even living in Kāśī does not give any merit without worshipping Kāla Bhairava. He is entrusted with the

preservation of the sanctity of Vārāṇasī by keeping the sinners out of the holy place and punishing those who indulge in sins inside Vārāṇasī Dharmakṣetra. The present temple, not far from the Town Hall and the General Post Office at Maidāgin, was built in 1825 A. D.

see : *KKh* 31 (specially from *śl* 148); 33.114-115; 72.93; *L I.* 92.132.

Sukul (1974) 191; (1977) 104-105; 240; 346 ff.

14. KAPĀLA MOCANA : It is the site said to be the *saṅgam* of the Matsyodarī with the Gaṅgā, where the skull fell from the hand of the wandering Bhairava Śiva. As nowadays this phenomenon of the saṅgam does not take place, the tīrtha has lost its importance. This *Ghāṭ* was situated between Oṃkāreśvara and Ṛṇamocana and Lāṭa Bhairava. People now avoid the area as it is inhabited only by muslims although until recently people used to make a *yātrā* to Kapālamocana tīrtha in the pool near Lāṭa Bhairava. A Kapāla Mocana *Ghāṭ* and a temple dedicated to Kapālamocaneśvara exist near Kāśī Railway Station.

see : *K I.* 35.15 *KK* 55; *KKh* 31.131-132; 73. 158-159; 97.66; *TS* 141, 168; *Mbh.* III. 83; 137 ; *Mt.* 183 84-103; *N II.* 29.38-60; *Pd.* V. 14.185-189; *Vm* 39.5-14; *Vr.* 97.24-26; *Kane* (1953) 639; *Sukul* (1974) 199 (1977) 71; 250; 348.

15. KAPILA HRADA (KAPILDHĀRA) : A pond outside the Vārāṇasī *Kṣetra*. It is situated in the village Kotwā beyond the Varṇā river. It might be one of the *Ghāṭs* of the original settlement of Kāśī. It is situated on the *Pañcakrośi* road, and the *śrāddha* to the *pitṛs* performed here is considered particularly efficacious.

see : *KK* 45-46; *KKH* 62.44 ff ; *L I.* 92.69-70; *Mbh* III. 84.78; *N. II.* 50.46; *Pd I.* 32.41; *TS* 172; *Sukul* (1977) 70-71

16. KĀŚIVIDYĀPĪTHA : see Universities.

17. KEDĀRA : A temple at Kedāra *Ghāṭ*. It contains one of the Svayambhu and Jyotir *liṅgas* of Vārāṇasī. It is at present one of the best constructed and best maintained temples of Vārāṇasī. Its walls are depicted with white and red strands. It is also called Ādi-Manīkarnikā. One of the leading traditional Daṇḍi Swāmīs, Swami Karpātri has his residence, in its neighbourood. The *Ghāṭ* is also linked with the name of Kumāraswāmī *maṭh*. The *Kāśī Kedāra Māhātmya* praises its greatness.

see : *Kāśikedāra Mahātmya*; *A* 112.5; *KKh* 77; *L* I. 92.7, 134; *K*. I. 35.12; II. 20.34; *Mbh* III. 87.25; *Mt* 181.29; *TS* 162.

Havell 121; *Motichandra* 219; *Sherring* 147 ff; *Sukul* (1974) 184; (1977) 161-163.

18. LALITĀ GHAT—Not far from Maṇikarṇikā *Ghāṭ*, but more southward, this *Ghāṭ* shelters the Lalitā Gauri and the Nepālī *mandir*. It was built by the Kings of Nepal. Its name derives from Lalitā, Rāja Mahendra Singh's mother.

see : *Mt* 22.11; *N* II. 49.41; *Bḍ* cf. III. 5-40.

19. LOLĀRKA KUṆḌA : It is situated at Bhadaini in the southern part of the city, not far from Assi *Ghāṭ*. Mahārāja Govinda Candra bathed here and gave the village in which the kuṇḍa was then situated to the Brāhmaṇas. It is the most important of the twelve Āditya *pīṭhas* of Vārāṇasī. The present construction was built by the Rānī Āhalyā Bāi, by a Rāja of Behar, and by Amrit Rāo. A great *melā* takes place on Bhādrapada *Sukla Pakṣa* 6th, which is based only on *śiṣṭācāra* and apparently on no text. Lolārka, according to *KKh* derives its name from the agitation of the sun on seeing Vārāṇasī.

see : *K* I. 35.14; *KKh* 46; *Mt* 185.68; *Pd* I. 37.17; *Vm* 15.58-59 *Kane* (1953) 634; *Sherring* 167-168; *Sukul* (1974) 192-193; (1977) 73; 111-112.

20. MANDĀKINĪ (MAIDĀGIN) : Until the last century a large pond, much celebrated in the purāṇas, used to be right in the centre of the town, near the Town Hall. At present only a small *kuṇḍa* remains in what is nowadays called Maidāgin.

see : *KKh*. 86-87

Sukul (1974) 197-198; (1977) 62-63

21. MAṆIKARṆIKĀ : This is the most renowned *tīrtha* of the town and the most celebrated *Ghāṭ* in the texts. It was well-known already in the Gupta times and it was the first to be built in stone, in 1302 A. D. It was very extensive in olden times. At present it is divided into two parts, one of which is used for cremation purposes. Worth seeing here are also the Cakra Puṣkarinī and Viṣṇu's Carāṇa Pādukā. It is one of the *Pañcatīrthas*.

see : *KKh* 26; 33-34; 61; 79; 99; *Mt* 182.24; 185. 69; *N* II. 40. 87; 49.44; *Pd* VI. 23.44 etc; *TS* 143.

Havell 136ff; *Kane* (1953) 635-636; *Motichandra* 217; 234; 266; 291; 299; 383; 389; 396; 398; *Sherring* 67 ff; *R. V. Singh* 51-52; *Sukul* (1974) 272-273; (1977) 68-70; 238; 353.

22. MĀN MANDIR : It is situated next to Daśāśvamedha Ghāṭ northwards. The Ghāṭ is surmounted by the Mān Mandir, a palace built by Mahārāja Man Singh before 1585 A.D. It is the oldest building in Vārāṇasī. In 1737 A.D. Sawai Jai Singh built an observatory in it, similar to the ones erected in Delhi, Mathurā, Ujjain and Jaipur.

Havell 126 ff; *Motichandra* 215; 383; 392; *Sherring* 129 ff; *Sukul* (1974) 276.

23. MATSYODARI : Until the last century, it was a big lake. During the rainy season its overflow went northwards and joined the Varṇā river. On these occasions when the Gaṅgā was heavily flooded, its waters pushed back the Varṇā waters and rushed up to Matsyodari waters near Omkāreśvara north of Kapālamocana pool. Today Matsyodarī (called *Machodarī*) is a small elliptical (fish-shaped) park—hence its name—and a pond not far from Omkāreśvara. In some texts it was regarded as a river (cf. *KK* 127).

see : *KK* 59;86-87;127; *KKh* 33.120; 69.136-137;73.155; *TS* 140-141; *Motichandra* 2;112;177;179;384; *Sherring* 114-115; *Sukul* (1974) 198-200; (1977) 63-65; 246-247; 295ff.

24. OMKĀREŚVARA : A Śivaliṅga and one of the three centres constituting the *antargrha* of Vārāṇasī, along with Viśveśvara and Kedāreśvara. Besides Omkāreśvara, there were four more temples dedicated respectively to Akāreśvara, Ukāreśvara, Makāreśvara and Bindu. At present the liṅga is still in its original position (at Adampura) but in a newly built small temple, situated on the top of a mound 'down the western slope of which is situated a big tank, the original Kapāla mocana tīrtha.' The whole area is now inhabited by Muslims and practically no Hindu visits it.

see : *K. I.* 32.1-11; *KK*. 57-58; *KKh* 73-74; *L I.* 92.137; *Pd I.* 34.1-4; *TS* 168; *Sukul* (1974) 183-184; (1977) 150-152;186-191

25. PAÑCAGANGĀ GHĀṬ : One of the *Pañcatīrthas*. It was built in stone for the first time in 1580 A. D. It is considered especially sacred in the month of Kārtika. Its name derives from

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the belief that 5 rivers, namely the Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Kiraṇā and Dhūtapāpā (*KKh* 59. 115) meet here.

see : *KKh* 59; *TS* 151

Havell 150-155; *Motichandra* 394; *Sherring* 107-110; *Sukul*(1974) 273; (1977) 60-61; 67-68; 261

26. **PIŚĀCAMOCANA** : A well-known pond where people go to be freed from the power of demons and all kinds of evil spirits. It is situated in the western part of the town, not far from Lahurabir. The *liṅga* of this *tīrtha* carries the name of Piśāceśvara.

see : *K. I.* 33. 2, 13-14; *KKh* 54; *I'd I.* 35. 2ff

Sherring 123ff; *Sukul* (1977) 272, 336-337

27. **RĀJGHĀṬ** : It is at the extreme northern part of the city, between the Railway bridge (Malviya bridge) and the Varṇā river. Excavations have been executed here as explained above. The ruins can be visited.

28. **RĀMNAGAR** : A town situated on the right bank of the Gaṅgā opposite to Banāras Hindu University. It is renowned for its Vyāseśvara temple, situated in the countryside which attracts thousands of people in the month of Māgha (Jan.-Feb.), and especially for being the residence of the Mahārāja of Banāras. The Palace or Fort right on the bank of the river, where the Mahārāja resides, was built in 1752 A. D. by Balvant Singh. At present the Fort contains a museum with a rich collection of arms and ivories and a Vyāseśvara Mandir (not the same as the above mentioned one). A temple known as Devī Mandir or Meru Mandir, situated at some distance from the Fort towards the North-East was completed in the last century and is the most beautiful temple of Vārāṇasī because of its fine sculptures on the external parts of the temple walls. Rāmnagar is the birthplace of the former Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri, who died in 1966 A. D. Among the famous festivals of Rāmnagar, the Rāmlīlā in the month of Āsvina is particularly noteworthy; it is a theatrical representation of the Rāmcaritamānas, lasting for a full month.

see : *Motichandra* 250ff. ; *Sherring* 169-173 (Meru temple, Durgā mandir) ; 173-174 (Vedavyāsa Mandir) ; 227 (Vedavyāsa) ; *Sukul* (1977) 360.

29. ŚAṆKAṬAMOCANA—It is a temple situated between the Mānas Mandir and Laṅkā at the extreme southern part of the city, not far from the Banāras Hindu University. It is a bit set back from the main road, being still in a small ancient *vana*. The main *mūrti* in stone depicted in red, represents the Hanumān's face in his capacity of remover of troubles. Opposite to this *mūrti*, there is a temple of Rāma with some rare paintings. The temple is frequented especially on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

see : *R. V. Singh* 115-116.

30. SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY (Saṃpūrnānanda Sanskrit Viśvavidyālaya) see Universities.

31. SĀRNĀTH—Sārṇāth, the ancient Ṛsipattana, is the well-known place where the Buddha started the turning of the *dharmacakra*. It is situated at 8 Km from the Cantonment Railway Station towards the north. Its name is derived from *Sāraṅganātha* or Lord of the deer, an epithet of Śiva under which he is still venerated in an ancient temple situated on a mound near the Railway Station of the village. Sārṇāth is worth an accurate visit. Things to be seen are the Museum, the Dhāmek *Stūpa*, the Mūlagandhakūṭi Vihār (the main temple), the Chinese and Tibetan temples and the ruins of the ancient Buddhist township. At Sārṇāth the Tibetan monastery, the Mahābodhi Society, the Kāśyapa Institute of Tibetan studies, a Jain temple, the Chaukhaṇḍi *stūpa* (known also as Śītā rasoi i. e. Sitā's kitchen) and a Śiva temple can also be visited.

see : *KKh* 58.71-72

Havell 32-55; V. S. Agrawala, *Sarnath*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1980 (3rd Ed.); *Kane* (1953) 641; *Motichandra* (passim); *Sherring* 230-270; *R. V. Singh* 264-267.

32. TRILOCANA GHĀṬ—This *Ghāṭ* and its temple were built by Nathu Bala of Pune. The Trilocaneśvara *liṅga* is one of the most important Śiva *liṅgas*.

see : *K. I.* 35.14-15; *KKh* 33.121; 75-76; *Pd I.* 37.17.

Sukul (1977) 160-161; *Sherring* 97-104.

33. TULSĪGHĀṬ—This *ghāṭ* is a little north of Assi *ghāṭ*. It preserves the small cave where Goswāmi Tulsīdās composed part of his *Rāmacaritamānas*. Here he died in 1623 A. D. His *pādukās*

are also preserved in this place. The *ghāṭ* is very much visited by devotees.

see : *R. V. Singh* 44

34. TULSĪMĀNAS MANDIR—It is a very recent temple built by Seth Ratan Lal Sureka. It is very near to Durgā temple and is dedicated to Sītā, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. On the walls the whole Rāmacaritamānas (as printed by Kashiraja Trust) is engraved. On the first floor there are also mechanically driven gadgets presenting scenes taken from the Rāmāyaṇa and the Purāṇas.

See : *R. V. Singh* 115 ; *Sukul* (1974) 235.

35. UNIVERSITIES : There are three Universities and several Degree Colleges in Vārāṇasī.

a. BANĀRAS HINDU UNIVERSITY (B. H. U.) It was established by Madan Mohan Malviya in 1917 with the aim of combining the study of ancient Indian culture with the modern sciences. It is one of the universities that depends directly on the Central Government. Beginning with the Hindu College as the core institution it has grown into one of the largest universities of the world, 'having several faculties and over one thousand two hundred teachers, to educate 14,000 pupils'. Right in the centre of the campus there is a big temple, dedicate to Viśvanātha, which was completed only in 1964. The vast land on which the University is extended was donated by H. H. Maharaja Sir Prabhu Narain Singh, the grand father of present Maharaja.

b. KĀŚĪ VIDYĀPĪTHA : It was established by Śiva Prasad Gupta Bhagavan Das, and others under the inspiration of Mahātmā Gandhi in 1921. It is situated at Sigra not far from the Cantonment Railway Station.

c. SAMPŪRṆĀNANDA SANSKRIT VIŚVAVIDYĀLAYA : Its beginning go back to the XVIII century when a Sanskrit Pāṭhaśālā was opened in 1791 A. D. The Patha Śālā was run by donation made by the Maharaja of Banaras under an agreement of Govt. with him. At present it imparts teachings in Sanskrit according to the traditional system of education. Several colleges are affiliated to it. It was called Vārāṇaseya Saṁskṛita Viśva vidyālaya till recently. It is situated in a large compound [near Lahurabir.

see : *R. V. Singh* 129; 136-138; *Sukul* (1974) 114-118

36. VARAṆĀ (Varṇā, Barṇā, Varuṇa) : This river is at the North of the town and delimits its borders. See Assi. Its sangam with Gaṅgā is one of the *Pañcatīrthas*.

see *Sukul* (1977) 258-260 and above.

37. VIŚĀLĀKṢĪ : It is one of the famous *Devī Pīṭhas* of Vārāṇasī, where Viśvanātha is said to rest. It is the only *Devī Pīṭha* among the 108 described in the Purāṇas, which is preserved in Vārāṇasī. It is situated near Dharmesvara at Mīr Ghāt.

see : *DBhg* VII. 38.27; *KKh*. 70;79.77; *Mt* 13.26; *Pd*. V. 17.190; *Sukul* (1977) 89.

38. VIŚVANĀTHA : It is the most important temple of the city, right in the centre. It was destroyed and rebuilt several times during the centuries and it changed also its name and place, being first known as Viśveśvara, Ādiviśvesvara, Avimuktesvara with different names in different ages and always in places a little removed from the present Viśvanātha. The present temple was built in the last quarter of the 18th century by Devi Ahalyabai Holkar. It was gilded in gold by Maharana Ranjit Singh in 1839; for this peculiarity it is also known as the Golden Temple.

see : *K*. I. 32. 12; II. 41. 59; *KK* 37; 109ff; *KKh* 39; 44; 97; 99; *N*. II. 51. 4; *Pd* I. 34. 10; *TS* 166

Kane (1953) 632-633; *Motichandra* (passim), specially 401; *Sherring* 47 ff.; *Sukul* (1974) 175-183; (1977) 130-150; 250-256; 329 ff.

39 VYĀSA : see Rāmnapar. There is also a Vyāseśvara in the corner of Viśvanātha temple.

see : *KKh* 95-96

GHĀṬS*

Name of the Ghāṭ	Builder or Present Owner
1. Nāgwā Ghāṭ	—
2. Assi Ghāṭ	Maharāja of Banāras
3. Lālā Miśra (Rewā) Ghāṭ	Maharāja of Rewā
4. Tulsī Ghāṭ	Mahant Swami Nath
5. Bhadaini Ghāṭ	Town Administration
6. Jānakī Ghāṭ	Thakur Asarphi Singh
7. Akrūra (Ānandamayī Mā) Ghāṭ	Ray Śiva Prasād
8. Vatsa Rāj (Jain) Ghāṭ	Babu Shekhar Chandra
9. Prabhu Ghāṭ	Nirmala Kumar
10. Chet Singh Ghāṭ	Rāja of Banāras
11. Nirañjanī Ghāṭ	Rāja of Pañcakōṭa
12. Nirwāṇi Ghāṭ	—
13. Śivalā Ghāṭ	Rāja of Banāras
14. Daṇḍi Ghāṭ	Lalluji Agrawala
15. Gulriyā Ghāṭ	„
16. Mysore (Karnataka State) Ghāṭ	Rāja of Mysore
17. Hanumān Ghāṭ	Mahant Hariharji
18. Lallī Ghāṭ	Mahārāja of Banāras
19. Vijayanagar Ghāṭ	Rāja of Vijayanagar
20. Kedār Ghāṭ	Kumaraswami
21. Chowkī Ghāṭ	Town Administration
22. Narwā Ghāṭ	„
23. Someśvara Ghāṭ	Kumaraswami
24. Mānsarovar Ghāṭ	Town Administration
25. Nārada Ghāṭ	Dattātreya Swami
26. Rāja Ghāṭ	Madhi Rao Peshwa
27. Khorī Ghāṭ	Kavindra Narain Singh
28. Sarveśvara Gaṅgā Mahāl Ghāṭ	Mathura Pandey
29. Paṇḍey Ghāṭ	Babua Pandey

* This list is taken from R. V. Singh, *Vārāṇasi* (in Hindi); see Bibliography.

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30. Dhobiya Ghāt	Kumaraswami
31. Digpatya Ghāt	Raja Digpati of Bengal
32. Chausaṭṭī Ghāt	Raja of Udaipur
33. Rānā Ghāt	„
34. Munshī Ghāt	Śrīdhara Munshi
35. Darbhanga Ghāt	„
36. Ahilya Bai Ghāt	Mahārāja Holkar of Indore
37. Śītala Ghāt	Town Administration
38. Prayāga Ghāt	Rani Patiya
39. Daśāśvamedha Ghāt	Town Administration
40. Ghoḍā Ghāt	Town Administration
41. Rajendra Prasād Ghāt	(A part of the previous one)
42. Mānmandir Ghāt	Maharāja of Jaipur
43. Tripurā Bhairavi (a) Ghāt	Maharāja of Banāras
44. „ (b) „	Pt. Māyānanda Giri
45. „ (c) „	Maharāja of Banāras
46. Mīr Ghāt	Rustam Ali
47. Phūta Ghāt	Swami Maheśvarānanda
48. Nepālī Ghāt	Nanhi Babu
49. Lalitā Ghāt	King of Nepal
50. Amrohāgiri Baulī Ghāt	Babu Kesav Das
51. Jalāsāī Ghāt	Town Administration
52. Khirkī Ghāt	„
53. Maṇikarnikā Ghāt	Holkar, Mahārāja of Indore
54. Bajīrāo (Maṇikarnikā) Ghāt	„
55. Scindhiyā Ghāt	Mahārāja of Gwalior
56. Samkathā Ghāt	Mahārāja of Baroda
57. Samkhatā Ghāt	
Gangā Mahal Ghāt	Mahārāja of Gwalior
58. Bhomsalā Ghāt	Mahārāja of Nagpur
59. Nayā Ghāt	Town Administration
60. Gaṇeśa Ghāt	Madho Peshwa
61. Agniśvara Ghat	„
62. Mehtā Ghāt	„
63. Rām Ghāt	„
64. Bālā or Maṅgalagaurī Ghāt	„
65. Pañcagaṅgā Ghāt	Town Administration
66. Veṇimādhava Ghāt	„

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67. Durgā Ghāṭ	Diwān of Gwalior
68. Brahmā Ghāṭ	”
69. Śītalā Ghāṭ	Maharāja of Bundi
70. Lāl Ghāṭ	Town Administration
71. Gāy Ghāṭ	”
72. Balā Bāi Ghāṭ	”
73. Trilocana Ghāṭ	”
74. Golā Ghāṭ	”
75. Nandū Ghāṭ	”
76. Pakkā Ghāṭ	”
77. Teliyā Nālā Ghāṭ	”
78. Nayā Ghāṭ	”
79. Prahlāda Ghāṭ	”
80. Rāj Ghāṭ	”
81. Varuṇā Saṅgama Ghāṭ	”

IMPORTANT TEMPLES AND MŪRTIS*

A. VIṢṆUPĪTHA

(see *KKh* 61.207-209; *TS* 101, 216)

<i>Name of the Temple or Mūrti</i>	<i>Place</i>
1. Ādi Keśava	Near Varṇā-Saṅgama
2. Bhīṣma Keśava	In the temple of Vṛddhakāla, H. No K. 52/39
3. Bhṛgu Keśava	Near Golā Ghāṭ
4. Gaṅgā Keśava	At Lālita Ghāṭ, H.No D. 1/67.
5. Hayagrīva Keśava	At Bhadaini, in the back of Ānanda-mayī Mā hospital.
6. Jñāna Keśava	Next to Ādikeśava
7. Nārada Keśava	At Prahlāda Ghāṭ—The <i>mūrti</i> is broken.
8. Nirvāṇa Keśava	Near Lolārka <i>kuṇḍa</i> .
9. Prahlāda Keśava	At Prahlāda Ghāṭ
10. Tribhūṣana Keśava	In the temple of Bandī Devī
11. Vāmana Keśava	a. Near Ādikeśava b. Near Trilocana
12. Bindu Mādhava	Above Pañcagaṅgā Ghāṭ. (There are other three temples with this name in the town.)
13. Jñāna Mādhava	In the temple of Pañca Pāṇḍava, near Jñānavāpī, H. No Ck 28/10.
14. Kāla Mādhava	At the back of Katha Haveli, near Kāla Bhairava, H. No K. 30/4.
15. Prayāga Mādhava	At Daśāśvamedha Ghāṭ, H. No D. 17/111.
16. Śaṁkha Mādhava	In a small maṭh at Śītalāghāṭ.
17. Śeṣa Mādhava	In Rājamandir, H. No K. 20/137
18. Śveta Mādhava	At Mīr Ghāṭ, in front of Hanumān, near Viśālākṣī.
19. Vaikuṇṭha Mādhava	At Scindiya Ghāṭ H. No Ck 7/167.
20. Vīra Mādhava	On the outer wall of the temple Ātma Vīreśvara, where a pūjā to Rāhū and Ketu takes place. H. No Ck 7/158.

* This part is based on Sukul (1977).

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21. Atyugra Nṛsimha In Gomāṭha H. No Ck 8/21
 22. Giri Nṛsimha At Dehli Vināyaka on the Pañca-
 krośi road.
 23. Jvālāmālī Nṛsimha In the village Kotwā across the
 Varṇā river.
 24. Kharva Nṛsimha At Durgā Ghāṭ, H. No. K. 22/52
 (Also in the temple of Brahmācarīnī -
 H. No K. 22/71)
 25. Kolāhala Nṛsimha Near Gomāṭha, H. No Ck 8/189.
 26. Lakṣmī Nṛsimha In the temple of Hanumān in Rāja
 mandir.
 27. Mahābala Nṛsimha In the temple of Kāmeśvara, near
 Omkāreśvara, H. No A. 2/9.
 28. Mahābhayahara Nṛsimha Near Pitamāheśvara in Śītalā Ghāṭ,
 H. No Ck 7/92.
 29. Pracanḍa Narasimha At Assi in the temple of Jagannātha.
 30. Vidāra Narasimha At Prahlāda Ghāṭ.
 31. Vitaṅka Narasimha In the temple of Kedāreśvara, H. No
 B 6/102.
 32. Dharṇī Varāha Near Prayāga Mādhava at Daśāśva-
 medha, H. No D. 17/111.
 33. Kokā Varāha In the temple of Siddheśvari, H. No
 Ck 7/124.
 34. Tāmra Varāha Near Nīlakaṇṭha, in Brahmānālā,
 H. No Ck 33/57.
 35. Yajña Varāha a. Near Svarlīneśvara (H. No A11/29
 b. In the temple of Hanumān at
 Mīr Ghāṭ.
 36. Gopi Govinda At Lāl Ghāṭ in the temple Gaurīśaṅ-
 kara.
 37. Nara Nārāyaṇa At Mehtā Ghāṭ
 38. Trivikrama At the north of Trilocana.

B. DEVĪ PITHAS

I. Nava Caṇḍī (see KK. 126-127)

1. Aṅgāreśvarī Famous with the name of Pañcakaṇḍī
 Mātā at Govabai Kuṇḍa in Nabāb Gañj,
 H. No. B. 27/20.
 2. Bhadrakālī At Madhyameśvara Muḥalla, H. No,
 K. 53/107.

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3. Bhīṣma Caṇḍī Re-established as Caṇḍī Devī at Saḍar Bazar.
4. Citra Ghaṇṭā In Candu Nau Gali near Rani Kuan, (see KK 127) H. No. Ck 23/4.
5. Durgā At Durgā Kuṇḍa, well known.
6. Mahā Muṇḍā Near Viśvakarmēśvara, South of Ṛṇamo-cana.
7. Śāṅkarī At Kakrahā Ghāṭ on the bank of the Varṇā river.
8. Śikhī Caṇḍī Near Mahālakṣmī (called usually Sikhi (see KKh 70.70-71) Kaṇṭhī), H. No D. 52/40.
- II. Durgā Pīṭhas (see KKh 72.82-86)
1. Brahmācārīṇī Known as Chotī Durgājī, at Durgā Ghāṭ, H. No K. 22/71.
2. Candra Ghaṇṭā (Citra Ghaṇṭā) Near Chowk, H. No Ck. 23/34.
3. Kalarātri Kālī of Kālīkā Gālī.
4. Kātyāyanī In the temple of Ātmavireśvara.
5. Kūṣmāṇḍā (Baḍī Durgā) In the Durgā temple.
6. Mahāgaurī (Annapūrṇā) Well known, near Viśvanātha temple.
7. Śailaputrī At Maḍhiyā Ghāṭ on the Varṇā river (Śaileśvarī Devī) bank.
8. Siddhidātrī (Siddhayogeśvarī or Siddheśvarī) H. No. Ck 7/124.
- III. Gaurī Pīṭhas (see KKh 100.68-72; KK 125-127)
1. Bhavānī Gaurī In ancient times the most famous (see KKh 16.10; 20. devī of Vārāṇasī. At present she is substituted by Annapūrṇā. Her mūrti is in the 107; 61.130 ff.; 79.76) temple of Rāma, next to Annapūrṇā temple, between Jagannātha and Kālī.
2. Jyeṣṭhā Gaurī At Bhūta Bhairava, H. No 63/24. (see KKh 63.14)
3. Lalitā Gaurī At Lalitā Ghāṭ.
4. Mahālakṣmī At Misir Pokhar. (see KKh 70.65-67)
5. Maṅgalā Gaurī H. No K. 24/34. (see KKh 49.86-88)

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6. Pārvatī Gaurī In the temple of Ādi Mahādeva, near the Pārvatīśvara liṅga.
7. Śāntikārī Gaurī Between Maḍhiyā Ghāṭ and Kakrahā Ghāṭ on the Varṇā river bank.
(see KKh 97 17. KK. 45)
8. Saubhāgya Gaurī In the enclosure of Ādi Viśveśvara.
9. Śṛṅgāra Gaurī In the temple of Viśvanātha.
10. Trilokasundarī On the door of the temple of Pitāmaheśvara.
Gaurī
11. Virūpākṣī Gaurī In the Viśvanātha temple.
(see KKh 70.36)
12. Viśālākṣī Gaurī (see Near Dharmesvara at Mīr Ghāṭ.
KKh 70.13-14; 79.77)
13. Viśvabhujā Gaurī In the enclosure of Dharmesvara, in the
(see TS 221, 225) temple of Divodāseśvara.
- IV. Aṣṭa Mātṛkā Pīṭhas (see KKh 97.45-46; KK 116)
 1. Aindrī Unknown at present. It was between
(see KKh 70.88) Indreśvara and Tārakeśvara on Maṇikar-
nikā Ghāṭ.
 2. Brāhmī At the north of Brahmesvara, H. No D.
(see KKh 70.32-33) 33/67.
 3. Cāmuṇḍā In the temple of Arkavināyaka near
(see KKh 70.88-91) Lolārka.
 4. Carcikā Between Brahmacāriṇī Durgā and
(KKh 97.90; KK 96) Maṅgalā-Gaurī, H. No K. 23/72.
 5. Maheśvarī Near Jñānavāpī
(see KKh 70.30)
 6. Vaiṣṇavī Perhaps she is the Śītalā at the north of
(see 70.34) Rājmandir. It was known as Nārāyaṇī,
H. No. K. 20/19
 7. Vārāhī Near Dalbhyesvara temple, H. No. 16/84
(KKh. 70.26) at Mānmandir Ghāṭ.
 8. Vikāṭā In Ātmavireśvara temple. She is called
(see 83.37-38; 97. Kātyāyaṇī Durgā. H. No. Ck 7/159, called
40.41; ST 156) Śaṅkaṭhāji.
- V. Yoginī Pīṭhas (see KKh 45; TS 249; VM 301)
They are 64. Of these :
—60 are in Chausatṭhī Ghāṭ in Rāṇa Mahal (At present only
5 are available)

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—Of the other 4 : Vārāhī is at Mīr Ghāt, H. No. 16/84
 Mayūrī at Lakṣmī Kuṇḍa
 Śukikā at Daṇḍiyāvīr
 Kāmākṣā at Kamacchā.

G. VINĀYAKAS (see KKh 57; KK 126)

Besides the 56 Vināyakas disposed all around the city in 7 concentric circles, other important Vināyakas are the followings :

1. Aristamani Vināyaka In front of Sīmā Vināyaka on the door of Vaśiṣṭha Vāmadeva temple.
2. Bhagīratha Vināyaka In Lahauri Tola Galī, near Karmesvara, south of Maṇikarṇikā.
3. Bindu Vināyaka In the temple of Bindumādhava.
4. Dhuṇḍhirāja (KKh. 57.43)
 - a. In Dhuṇḍhirāja Galī
 - b. In the temple of Rānī Bhavānī, H.No. Ck 35/28. He is 'Pancamukhī'
 - c. In a house nearby H. No. Ck. 37/18, He is also 'Pañcamukhī.'
5. Hariścandra Vināyaka At Śaṅkaṭhā Ghāt, H. No. K. 7/165
6. Kapardī Vināyaka At Piśacamacana
7. Mahārāja Vināyaka A big Gaṇeśa at H. No K. 58/101
8. Maṇḍa Vināyaka In H. No D. 52/38, north of Mahālakṣmī Kuṇḍa.
9. Mitra Vināyaka In Ātmavireśvara
10. Senā Vināyaka In a small temple facing Hariścandra Maṇḍapa.
11. Sīmā Vināyaka In a temple with the same name at the northern border of Maṇikarṇikā.

D. ĀDITYA PITHAS (see KKh 64. 44-47)

1. Aruṇāditya In the temple of Trilocana
2. Drupadāditya (see KKh. 49. 15-21) Near Viśvanātha temple in the area of the Akṣayavata, H. No Ck 34/20.
3. Gaṅgāditya (see KKh. 51. 101, 104) At Lalitā Ghāt, H. No D. 1/67
4. Karṇāditya (see KKh. 84.85) Between Śītālā Ghāt and Rājmandir, H. No K. 20/147
5. Keśavāditya (see KKh. 51. 73-77) In the temple of Ādikeśava at Varṇā-Saṅgam.

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6. Khakholkāditya On the door of Kāmeśvara Mahādeva, H.
(Vinatāditya) (see No A. 2/9
KKh 50. 149-150)
7. Lolārka (see KKh. At Bhadaini.
46. 53-59)
8. Mayūkhāditya (see In the temple of Maṅgalā Gaurī, H. No
KKh 50.94) K. 24/34
9. Sāmbāditya (Sūrya Near Aurangabad
Kuṇḍa) (see KKh.
48. 48-51)
10. Sumantvāditya (see In the temple of Hanumān near Hanumān
KKh. 65. 6) Phātak
11. Uttarārka (see It is identified with Bakariyā Kuṇḍa at
KKh. 47. 1-2, 57) Alaipura
12. Vimalāditya Near Harikeśeśvara at Jangambarī,
(see KKh. 51.83, 99) H. No D. 35/273
13. Vṛddhāditya In the temple of Hanumān at Mīr Ghāṭ,
(see KKh. 51.41-42) H. No D. 3/15
14. Yamāditya At Yameśvara Ghāṭ near Śaṅkaṭhā Ghāṭ,
(see KKh 51.106) H. No Ck 7/164

E. ŚIVA LINGAS ETC.

I. The 12 Jyotirlingas of Vārāṇasī

1. Bhīmaśaṅkara
(Bhīmeśvara) At Kāśī-Karwat, H. No Ck. 32/12
2. Ghusraneśvara
(Ghusmeśvara) Near Vaṭuka Bhairava
3. Kedāreśvara At Kedāra Ghāṭ.
4. Mahākāleśvara H. No K 52/39 near Vṛddhakāla temple.
5. Mallikārjuna
(Tripurāntakeśvara) At Sigra, H. No D. 59/95
6. Nāgeśvara
 - a. At Vṛddhakāla temple.
 - b. Near Bhomsalā Ghāṭ H. No Ck 1/21
 - c. At Mehtā Ghāṭ.
7. Oṃkāreśvara H. No A. 33/23 in Oṃkāreśvara Muhallah
8. Rāmeśvara
 - a. At Rāma Kuṇḍa
 - b. At Mānmandir, near the Someśvara temple.
 - c. At Hanumān Ghāṭ.

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| 9. Someśvara | Near H. No D. 16/34 at Mānmandir. |
| 10. Tryambakeśvara
(Trilokanātha) | At Baḍādeva in the temple of Puruṣo-
ttama Bhagavān, H. No D. 38/21. |
| 11. Vaidyanāth
(Baijanātha) | At Kamacchā. |
| 12. Viśveśvara | At Jñānavāpī, H. No Ck 35/19 |

II. *Svayambhuliṅgas*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Avimukteśvara | a. Inside Viśvanāth temple in South-
East corner.
b. In front of Jñānavāpī mosque. |
| 2. Bhurbhuvārliṅga | East of Gaṇādhipa—ruined. |
| 3. Jyeṣṭheśvara | Near Karṇa Ghaṇṭā at Saptasāgara, H.
No K. 62/144. |
| 4. Madhyameśvara | North of Maidāgin. In front of H. No
K. 53/63. |
| 5. Kedāreśvara | At Kedār Ghāṭ. |
| 6. Kapardīśvara | At Piśācamocana, H. No C 21/40 |
| 7. Mahādeva
(Ādimahādeva) | Near Trilocana. |
| 8. Omkāreśvara | At Koila Bazar, Pathani Tola, H. No
A. 33/23. |
| 9. Svayambhū liṅga | Near Mahālakṣmīśvara, H. No D. 54/114. |
| 10. Vīreśvara
(Ātmavīreśvara) | H. No Ck 7/158. |
| 11. Viśveśvara | H. No Ck 35/19 at Jñānavāpī |
| 12. Vṛṣabhadhvaja | At Kapildhārā. |

III. Bhairava Pīṭhas (see KKh 31.40-52; 33.114-115; 72.93; Mt. 181.28-30).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Asitāṅga Bhairava
(see KKh 69.72) | In the temple of Vṛddhakālā |
| 2. Bhīṣaṇa Bhairava
(Bhūta Bhairava)
(see KKh. 74.52) | H. No K. 63/28 at Bhūta Bhairava
Muhallah. |
| 3. Gaṇḍa Bhairava | In the temple of Durgā at Durgā Kuṇḍa. |
| 4. Kapālī Bhairava
(see KKh 66.13-15) | It is praised as Lāṭa Bhairava. |
| 5. Krodhana Bhairava | In the temple of Kāmākṣā Devī. |
| 6. Ruru Bhairava | At Hanumān Ghāṭ outside Gomāṭha. |

7. Saṁbhāra Bhairava Near Patan Darwāja, H. No A. 1/83.
(see KKh 69.95-96)
8. Unmatta Bhairava Near Bhūmacaṇḍī on the Pañcakrośī Road.

IV. Other famous liṅgas

1. Dharmēśvara H. No D 2/21 in Dharmakūpa Muhallah
(see KKh. 78.46-55;
VM 267-268)
TS 165.
2. Jagīśavyēśvara a. On the door of Jagīśavya-guhā, H.
(see KKh 63.80; No. J. 66/33
KK 92)
b. In front of Bhūta Bhairava, H. No
K. 63/28
3. Kāmēśvara a. H. No A 2/9
(see KKh 85. 78-80 b. H.No K. 30 in Ghasi tola.
KK 64
4. Kṛttivāseśvara H. No K. 46/23 near Ratneśvara temple.
(see K. 32.22; KK 77-
78; TS 175)
5. Trilocana H. No A. 2/80 at Trilocana Ghāt
(see KKh. 75.24-74)
6. Vṛddhakāleśvara H.No K. 52/39 in Vṛddhakāla Muhalla
(see KKh 24.73-74;
97.129; KK 72-75;
TS 177)
7. Tilabhandeśvara In Paṇḍey Haveli

F. VETĀLA, NĀGA, RUDRAGAṆA

1. Vetāleśvara Mahādeva H. No K. 53/32. At present there is no
(see KKh 69. 73-74) mūrti.
2. Nāgas
a. Karkoṭaka Nāga Near Karkoṭakavāpī, called also Nāga-
Kuān. A great melā takes place on
Nāgapañcamī.
b. Bhadrānāga In Bhadra Kūpa Muhallah.
3. Rudragaṇa—Among the 8 famous Rudras at Vārāṇasī *Daṇḍa-
pāṇi* is the best known (see KKh 32.151-157 ; Mt. 180.96-99 ;
TS 193)
a. H. No Ck 36/10 in Dhuṇḍhirāja Galī
b. H. No K. 32/26, in the back of Kāla Bhairava temple.
c. In form of Śiva liṅga in the enclosure of Viśvanātha temple.

IMPORTANT YĀTRĀS

1. Āditya yātrā Each Āditya has his own day, but Sunday
(see KD 136) is particular fit for their visit.
2. Antargṛha yātrā daily
(see KKh 100. 76-96)
It includes :
 - a. Viśveśvara antargṛha yātrā
 - b. Kedāreśvara antargṛha yātrā
 - c. Omkāreśvara antargṛha yātrā
3. Bhairava yātrā (specially
Kāla Bhairava) (see TS 195) a. Every month on aṣṭamī
and caturdaśī
b. Every Sunday and Tuesday
4. Dvādaśa Jyotirlinga yātrā At will
5. Ekāyatana yātrā At will
(see KD 44, TS 166; KK 109)
Dvirāyatana yātrā „
(KD 154)
Trirāyatana yātrā „
(see KK 123)
Caturāyatana yātrā „
(see TS 261)
Pāñcāyatana yātrā „
(TS 261)
Ṣaḍaṅga yātrā „
(see KK 124; TS 261-262)
Aṣṭāyatana yātrā „
(see KK. 122; KKh 100.49-50)
Ekādaśa āyatana yātrā „
(KKh 100.63-65)
Caturdaśa āyatana yātrā „
(see KK 121-122, 135; KKh
73.32-35, 45-47)
6. Jalatīrtha yātrā (= bath)
Ekatīrtha yātrā (see KD 157)
Dvitīrtha yātrā (KD 157)
Tritīrtha yātrā (see KD 157)
Catutīrtha yātrā (see KD 157)

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Pañcatīrtha yātrā (see KKh 84.108-110) The five tīrthas are Assi, Daśāśvamedha, Varuṇā, Pañcagaṅgā, Maṇikarṇikā)

Śaḍaṅga tīrthayātrā (see TS 262)

7. Nava Durgā yātrā Every aṣṭamī and caturdaśī at Durgā kuṇḍa. For Navarātrī one different Durgā is visited every day.
(see KKh 72.82)
8. Nava Gaurī yātrā Every Month for Tritīyā Śukla Pakṣa, specially in the month of Caitra.
(see KKh 100.68-72; KK 125-126)
9. Nityā yātrā (see KR 16) daily
10. Pañcakrośī yātrā The longest and most renowned yātrā of Vārāṇasī. It is usually completed in five days. Some say that it can be done in every month, but the month of Vaiśākha attracts the greatest number of people. Other months are Aśvin, Kārtika, Mārga-sīrṣa, Māgha and Phālgun.
(see KR 10-11)
11. Śaṅkaṭa mocan Every Tuesday and Saturday.
12. Saptapurī yātrā In the different astronomical season of the year.
(KR 13.26-39)
13. Saptarṣi yātrā Specially on Rṣipañcamī.
(see KKh 100. 87)
14. Vighneśvara or Vināyaka yātrā It should be done every month
(see KKh 57; TS 230) on Kṛṣṇa pakṣa, Caturthī.
15. Viṣṇu yātrā Every ekādaśī.
(see list of Viṣṇu pīṭha)
16. Nowadays most of the pilgrims who come to Kāśī visit also the Kāśī Viśvanātha of the Banāras Hindu University and the Tulsī Mānas Mandir. Both the temples are very recent and for their visit nothing is prescribed in the ancient texts.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS*

A. ŚAIVA : DAŚANĀMI

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| I. Daṇḍi | |
| 1. Chausaṭṭhī Maṭha | D 21/12 Chausaṭṭhī Ghāṭ |
| 2. Dakṣiṇā Mūrti Maṭha | B 1/127 Assi |
| 3. Gomaṭha | Ck 8/21 Gadhavasi Tola. |
| 4. Kālī Maṭha | D 52/35 Lakshmī Kuṇḍa |
| 5. Kāmarūpa Maṭha | D 17/63 Daśāśvamedha |
| 6. Kāñchi Kāmakoti Maṭha | B 4/7 Hanumān Ghāṭ |
| 7. Mumukṣhu Bhāvana | B 1/86-87 Assi |
| 8. Rājaguru Śaṅkara Sumeru Maṭha | D 34/123 Gaṇesh Mohal |
| 9. Shaṅkara Maṭha | B 8/19 Barā Gambhir Singh |
| 10. Śringeri Shaṅkarācārya Maṭha | B 14/111 Kedār Ghāṭ |
| 11. Viśuddhānanda Maṭha | D 20/18 Munshi Ghāṭ |

II. Nāga

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Augharnath ki Takiya | Ck 65/390 Bari Piyari |
| 2. Awahana Akhāra | D 17/122 Daśāśvamedha Ghāṭ |
| 3. Gaṅgā Giri Āshrama | A 36/42 Rāj Ghāṭ |
| 4. Joona Akhāra | B 4/42 Hanumān Ghāṭ |
| 5. Nirañjani Akhāra | B 3/155 Shivālā Ghāṭ |
| 6. Nirvāṇi Akhāra | B 3/177 Shivālā Ghāṭ |
| 7. Shaṅkudhāra Āshrama | B 22/159 Shaṅkudhāra |

III. Paramahansa

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Bhārata Dharma Mahā-maṇḍala | Lahurabir |
| 2. Bholānanda Vidyābhāvana | B 3/277 Sonarpura |
| 3. Dakṣiṇāmūrti Maṭha | D 48/9 Mishra Pokhara |
| 4. Maunī Bāba | Ck 34/6 Phoota Gaṇesh |
| 5. Mrityuñjaya Āshrama | D 37/9 Baradeo |
| 6. Sanskrit Brahmayāgyā Mahāvidyālaya | D 37/122 Baradeo |

* Only a selection. Most of these places have attached or run also an educational institution. This list is based on S. Sinha, B. Saraswati, *Ascetics of Kashi*, see Bibliography.

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|--|-------------------------|
| 7. Shaṅkara Vedānta Pīṭha | D 35/148 Jangambari |
| 8. Siddhagiri Maṭha (Rāja
Rajeshwari Maṭha) | D 1/58 Lalitā Ghāt |
| 9. Tilabhandeshawara Maṭha | B 17/42 Bhelupura |
| 10. Yogānanda Giri Maṭha | B 21/89 Batuka Bhairava |
| 11. Kumaraswami Maṭha | Kedār Ghāt |
| 12. Jangambarī Maṭha | D 35/77 Jangambarī |

B. VAIṢṆAVAS**I. Brahma Sampradāya****a. Gauḍīya**

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Sanātana Gauḍīya
Maṭha | B 8/17 Bara Gambhir Singh |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|

b. Madhva

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Uttarādi Maṭha | B 5/299 Awadhagarbi |
|-------------------|---------------------|

**c. Rādhavallabhi (Rādhā
Swami)**

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Swami Bāgh | Kabirchaura |
|---------------|-------------|

d. Śakhī Sampradāya

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Mātājī Siyārāma Ali | B 26/88 Nababganj |
|------------------------|-------------------|

II. Rudra Sampradāya**a. Vallabha**

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Gopal Mandir | K 37/87 Chaukhambha |
| 2. Mahāprabhujī kī
Baiṭhaka | B 4/40 Hanuman Ghāt |

b. Viṣṇu Swami

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Satua Bābā kā
Āshrama | Ck 10/48 Maṇikarnikā Ghāt |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|

III. Śrī Sampradāya**a. Rāmānandi**

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Dwarkādhīsh Mandir | B 22/195 Shankudhārā |
| 2. Badarikāshrama | Ck 60/47 Karnaghaṇṭā |

b. Rāmānujī

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Jagadguru Rāmānuja
Kāshī Pīṭha | B 1/148-C Assi |
| 2. Dwarkādīsh Mandir | B 1/157 Assi |

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IV. Sanakā Sampradāya

a. Nimbārka

1. Ānanda Devī Mātri

Āshrama

B 3/189 Shivalā

2. Santa Āshrama

D 53/88-C Santa Nagar, Lakṣā.

C. SANTA SAMPRADĀYA

a. Udāsin

1. Sādhubela Āshrama

B 2/259 Bhadaini

b. Kabīrpanth

1. Kabīr Maṭha

Kabīrchaura

c. Garibdāsi

1. Maṅgala Maṭha

D 38/37 Banshaphataka

d. Gheesa

1. Swami Balajeeta Paramartha

Bhāvana

CK 8/10 Maṇikarṇikā

e. Dadupanthi

1. Dadu Maṭha

BI/20 Assi

f. Nirmala

1. Nirmala Panchayati Akhāra

(Saṅgata Bābā Vir Singh)

CK 48/156,157 Harhasarai

g. Pranāmipantha

1. Śrī Krishṇa Pranāmi Mandir

CK 4/14 Bhikhāridas
Muhalla, Chaukambha

h. Sikh

1. Gurubāgh Gurudwāra

B 21/13 Gurubāgh, Lakṣā

i. Swāminārāyaṇa

1. Swāminārāin Mandir

K1/1 Machodari

D. BAUDDHA

1. Burmese Buddha Mandir

17/332 Maldahiya

2. Buddha Mandir

D 64/135 Sagra

3. Bhāratīya Bauddha Saṅgha

G 21/1-C Maldahiya

4. Mahābodhi Society and

Tibetan Monastery

Sārṇāth

E. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Aghor Panthi Pīṭha

Rbindra Puri

2. Ānandamay Saṅgha

Bhadaini

3. Ārya Samāj Mandir

K. 61/67 Bulānāla

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- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 4. Bhārat Sevāśrama Saṅgha
(Paramahansa Sannyāsi) | D 64/133 Sagra |
| 5. Brahmakumārī Ishwariya
Viśvavidyālaya | Sagra |
| 6. Rāmakrishna Advaita Āshrama
(Paramahansa Sannyāsi) | Lakṣā |
| 7. Tailaṅga Swami Maṭha | K 23/95 Pañchagaṅgā Ghāṭ |

MAIN FESTIVALS*

Note : Correspondence of lunar months with the Gregorian Calendar :

Caitra	—March-April
Vaishākha	—April-May
Jyeṣṭha	—May-June
Āsāḍha	—June-July
Śravaṇa	—July-August
Bhādrapad	—August-September
Āśvina	—September-October
Mārgasīrṣa	—November-December
Pauṣa	—December-January
Māgha	—January-February
Phalgun	—February-March

SP = Śukla pakṣa (waxing moon); KP = Kṛṣṇa pakṣa (waxing moon).

1. Caitra Navarātri	Caitra SP 1-9
2. Rāma Navamī	Caitra SP 9th
3. Pañcakrośi yātrā	Vaiśākha
4. Śitalā aṣṭamī	Vaiśākha KP 8th
5. Vaiśākhi Pūrṇimā	Vaiśākha SP 15th
6. Gaṅgā Dasahara	Jyeṣṭha SP 10th
7. Nirjalā Ekādaśī	Jyeṣṭha SP 11th
8. Ratha Yātrā	Āsāḍha SP 2-4th
9. Guru (Vyāsa) Pūrṇimā	Āsāḍha SP 15th
10. Durgāji kā Melā	Every Tuesday of Śravaṇa
11. Nāga Pañcamī	Śravaṇa SP 5th
12. Jhula Festival	Five days after Nāga Pañcamī and it lasts five days.
13. Śrāvanī and Rakṣābandhan	Śravaṇa SP 15th
14. Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī	Bhādrapada KP 8th
15. Lolārka Śaṣṭhī	Bhādrapada SP 6th
16. Lakṣmī Kuṇḍa Mela or Sodaliya Fair	For 16 days from Bhādrapada SP 7th

* This list is based on Sukul (1974)

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17. Rāmlīlā (Rāmnagar)	From Bhādrapada SP 14th to Āsvina SP 14th
18. Durgā Pūjā	Āsvina SP 1-9th
19 Vijaya Daśamī (Dasaahara)	Āsvina SP 10th
20. Bharat Milāp	Āsvina SP 11th
21. Chetganj Nakkataiya	Kārtika KP 4th
22. Dīvālī	Kārtika KP 15 th
23. Kṛṣṇa Līlā of Tulsī Ghāṭ	In the month of Kārtika. Famous is the Nāg Nathaiya.
24. Bhairavāṣṭamī	Mārgaśīrṣa KP 8th
25. Piśācamocana yātrā (called Loṭa-Bhanta Melā)	Mārgaśīrṣa SP 14th
26. Gaṇeśa Caturthī	Māgha KP 4th
27. Vedavyāsa Fair	Every Monday of Māgha
28, Vasanta Pañcamī	Māgha SP 5th
29. Māghī Pūrṇimā	Māgha 15th
30. Śiva Rātri	Phalguna KP 14 th
31. Holi	Phalguna SP 15th

Big masses are attracted to bathe in the Gaṅgā during the solar and lunar eclipses.

KĀRTIKA AND VARĀṆASĪ

Among the Hindus, especially the Vaiṣṇavas, the lunar months Kārtika, Māgha and Vaiśākha are very sacred and auspicious for religious points of view. Among these three Kārtika and Vaiśākha are most sacred.¹ The reason behind it is that lord Viṣṇu awakens in Kārtika and he rescued the earth from the waters of deluge in Vaiśākha. The Vedic name for this month is Ūrja which means grains, milk, butter etc. In this month these things are reaped and found in abundance and thus the month is termed as Ūrja.² Kārtika is named because the full moon day in this month falls on lunar mansion Kṛttikā. Another term found is *Kumuda*, which is not very prevalent.

In Nibandha texts this month and the vows to be observed in it are highly eulogised.

The Varṣakriyākaumudī, quoting Matsya Purāṇa says that even the gift of heaps of golds like Meru mountains are not equal to the vows performed in Kārtika

सुवर्णभिक्षुल्यानि सर्वदानानि चैकतः ।

एकतः कार्तिको मासः सर्वथा केशवप्रियः ॥

The Kālaviveka on the authority of the Nārada P. says that Kārtika is most sacred and it is worshipped by gods, sages and Manes and even the meagre vow gives great merits.

सुपुण्ये कार्तिके मासि देवर्षिपितृसेविते ।

क्रियमाणे व्रते नृणां स्वल्पोऽपि महाफलम् ॥

In the same text it is further stated on the authority of the same Purāṇa that there is no other month like Kārtika, no other Yuga like Kṛtayuga, no other scripture like Veda and no other Tīrtha like Gaṅgā.

1. See Varāha Purāṇa, ch. 122.24, (critical edn),

कौमुद्यां च प्रबुद्धोऽस्मि वैशाख्यां त्वं समुद्धृता ।

महादानाधिको योगस्तैनैतत् प्रभवो धरे ॥

also Padma Purāṇa, (Uttara Kk.) 99ff.

2. In Nighaṇṭu (2/7/14) the word is explained as grains but in Niruktavivṛti the word is explained as having the meaning milk, butter etc : इषमन्नमूर्जं पयोघृतादि रसं च

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न कार्तिकसमो मासः न कृतेन समं युगम् ।
न वेदेन समं शास्त्रं न तीर्थं गङ्गया समम् ।

In the month of Kārtika Kāśī has especial importance. All Tīrthas including Tīrtharāja Prayāga come to Vārāṇasī to take their baths in Gaṅgā at Pañcagangā (also called Pañcanada). Hence morning baths in Pañcanada and worship of Bindumādhava is highly spoken of and it removes the sins committed in hundreds of lives.

तीर्थराजादितीर्थानि प्राप्ते कार्तिकमासके ।
स्नानार्थं पञ्चगङ्गं तु समायान्ति न संशयः ॥
कृत्वा तु लक्षपापानि स्नात्वा पञ्चनदे शुभे
बिन्दुमाधवमभ्यर्च्य विलयं यान्ति तत्क्षणात्
जन्ममध्ये सकृदपि स्नानं पञ्चनदे शुभे ।
बिन्दुमाधवमभ्यर्च्य मुक्तो जन्मान्तरे भवेत् ॥

—Sanat Kumāra saṁhitā 8.38-39

It is further narrated that human form is a rare fortune and a visit in Kāśī is more coveted, and there also a bath in Pañcagangā in Kārtika is very rare. Whosoever takes his baths there accrues the merits of a bath in all the Tīrthas multiplied by crores :

दुर्लभो मानुषो देहो दुर्लभा काशिका पुरी ।
तत्रापि कार्तिके मासि पञ्चगङ्गं सुदुर्लभम् ॥
यैः स्नानं कार्तिके मासि सकृत्पञ्चनदे शुभे ।
सर्वतीर्थकृतं स्नानफलं कोटिगुणं भवेत् ॥

—Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā 8.45-46

In Kāśīkhaṇḍa it is said that the merit which a person can get after practicing penance for hundred years in Satyayuga he can get by a single bath in Pañcagangā in Kārtika. It is further said that a person who takes in Bindu Tīrtha in Kārtika before sun-rise has no fear from Yama :

शतं समास्तपस्तप्त्वा कृते यत्प्राप्यते फलम्
तत् कार्तिके पञ्चनदे सकृत्स्नानेन लभ्यते ॥
कार्तिके बिन्दुतीर्थे यो ब्रह्मार्च्यपरायणः ।
स्नास्यत्यनुदिते भानौ भानुजातस्य भीःकुतः ।

—Quoted in Nirṇaya Sindhu on Kārtika

Rules to be observed in Kārtika—In the month of Kārtika a man should bathe in the morning outside the house either in a river, tank or in the well. He should take his meal made of haviṣyā-nna and observe celibacy. He should lit the lamps for Lord Viṣṇu in open sky (ākāśadīpā) in the evening times.

तुलामकरमेषेषु प्रातःस्नानं विशेषतः
हविष्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं च महापातकनाशनम् ।
आमिषं मैथुनं चैव कार्तिके मासि यस्त्यजेत् ।
सर्वकालं कृतं पापं दुष्कृतं चापकर्षति ॥
तुलायां तिलतैलेन सायंसंध्यासमागमे
आकाशदीपं यो दद्यान्मासमेकं निरन्तरम् ।
सश्रीकाय श्रीपतये स श्रीमानभिजायते ॥

—Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa quoted in Varṣakriyākaumudī pp. 455-6
The meat and pulses are especially forbidden in this month.

Important Festivals in Kārtika—In this various festivals and vratas are observed such as Karka Caturthī on (4th day) dark half (2) Dhanvantari Jayanti or Dhanatrayodaśī (on 13th day of dark half) (3) Naraka Caturdasi & Hanumat (4) Diwali Jayantī (on 14th day of dark half). (5) Gokṛīdanaka and Bali Pūjā (on 1st Jay of bright half) (6) Yamadvitiya (on 2nd day of bright half. (7) Akṣayanavamī (on 9th day of bright half). (8) Viṣṇu Prabodhani Ekādaśī (on 11th day). From this day upto Purnimā 5 days are called as Bhīṣmapañcaka; on these days libation to Bhīṣma is prescribed. (9) Kārtika Purnimā (full moonday).

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ABBREVIATIONS

- A Agni Purāṇa
ASS Ānanda Saṁskṛit Series, Poona
Bḍ Brahmanḍa Purāṇa
Bhg Bhāgavata Purāṇa
Bhv Bhaviṣya Purāṇa
Bibl. Ind. Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta
B (Br) Brahma Purāṇa
Bṛd. Up. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
Bv Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa
Cr. Ed. Critical Edition
DBhg Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa
Exc. Narain, A. K.-Roy, T. N., *Excavations at Rajghat* etc. (see Bibliography)
G Garuḍa Purāṇa
H No House Number
Jab. Up. Jabāla Upaniṣad
K Kūrma Purāṇa
Kane (1953) *History of Dharmasāstra* vol. IV, Poona
KD Kāśī Darpaṇa (quoted in Sukul (1977))
KK Kṛtya Kalpataru, Tirtha Vivecana Khaṇḍa
KKh Kāśī Khaṇḍa of the Skand Purāṇa
KR Kāśī Rahasya
L Liṅga Purāṇa
Mbh Mahābhārata
Mk Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
Mor Gurumaṇḍala Grantha Mālā, Mansukh Ray Mor, Calcutta
Mt Matsya Purāṇa
N Nāradiya Purāṇa
p page, purāṇa
Pāṇ Pāṇini
Pd Padma Purāṇa
Ś Śiva Purāṇa
Sau Saura Purāṇa
R. V. Singh *Varāṇasi*, Ek parampāgata Nagar, Varāṇasi, 1973
(Hindi)



Sk Skanda Purāṇa

Sukul (1974) *Vārāṇasī Down the Ages* (English)

Sukul (1977) *Vārāṇasī Vaibhava* (Hindi)

Sv Svayambhu Purāṇa

TS Tristhalīsetu

TV Tīrthavivecana Khaṇḍa of Kṛtyakalpataru

Vārt. Vārtika

VDhtt Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa

Veṅk Veṅkaṭeśvara Steam Press (Khemaraj

Śrīkṛṣṇadās), Bombay

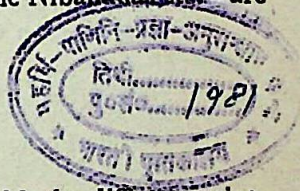
Vi Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Vm Vāmana Purāṇa

VM Vīramitrodaya

Vr Varāha Purāṇa

Vy Vāyu Purāṇa



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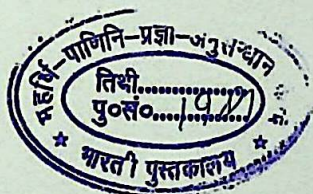
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